

Handbook 117

Carl Sandburg Home

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site North Carolina

Produced by the Division of Publications National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior Washington, D.C. 1982

About This Book

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site in Flat Rock, North Carolina, memorializes the poet-author who spent the last 22 years of his life here. This handbook, divided into three sections, is published in support of the National Park Service's management policies and interpretive programs at the park. In Part 1, Paula Steichen, granddaughter of Carl Sandburg, tells of the family life at Connemara, and in Part 2 she presents a biographical essay on the man and his works. Part 3 provides concise tourist information and reference materials.

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Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data Main entry under title: Carl Sandburg Home. (National park handbook; 117) Includes index. Contents: Hyacinths and biscuits: The life and works of Carl Sandburg by Paula Steichen—Guide and adviser. Supt. of Docs. no.: I 29.9/5:117 1. Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (Flat Rock, N.C.)—Guide-books. 2. Sandburg, Carl, 1878-1967—Homes and haunts—North Carolina—Flat Rock. 3. Flat Rock (N.C.)—Dwellings—Guidebooks. 4. Sandburg, Carl, 1878-1967—Addresses, essays, lectures. 5. Authors, American – 20th century—Biography—Addresses, essays, lectures. I. Steichen, Paula. II. United States. National Park Service. Division of Publications. III. Series: Handbook (United States. National Park Service. Division of Publications); 117. 811'.52 [B] 82-600299 PS3537.A618Z5384 1982

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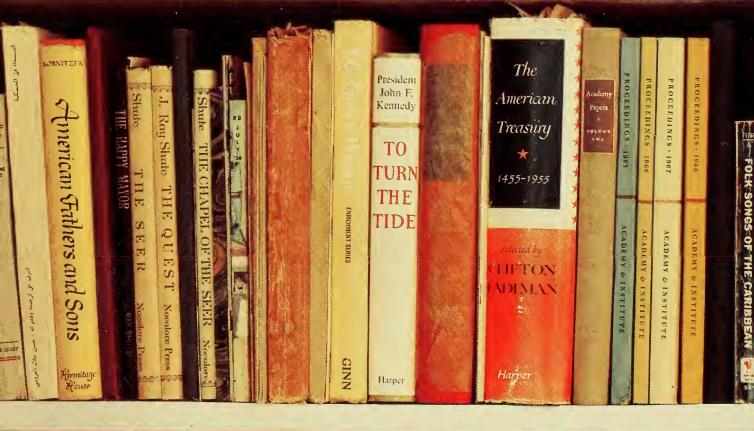
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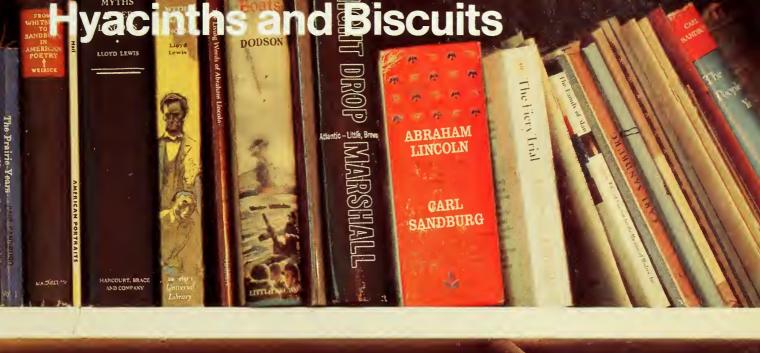
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Welcome to Connemara

In one of my grandfather's bureau drawers at Connemara, along with a Hohner harmonica and a number of the scarves that he wrapped around his neck for warmth, I once came upon a box containing a small packet of tiny cards that had been printed in the Far East. On one side of each card was an Oriental painting, and on the opposite side, a proverb. It was an odd little packet, and I took a liking to it, so my grandfather gave it to me. Years later I was to come upon it again in my own drawer and find new meaning in at least one of the sayings on the cards. It was the ancient Persian proverb: "If I had two loaves of bread I would sell one to buy white hyacinths to feed my soul."

After my grandfather's death in 1967, I heard that he had sometimes quoted that proverb and then added his own twist to it, "Nor let us forget the reverse of that: 'If I had two baskets of white hyacinths, I would hope to God that I could sell one to buy some bread to feed myself."

In 1923, my grandfather, Čarl Sandburg, wrote his 38 definitions of poetry, the 36th one reading, "Poetry is the achievement of the synthesis of hyacinths and biscuits." It is a definition that is particularly descriptive of his own poetry, and, beyond that, it is even descriptive of his own life. His writings and his days were a rare mixture of the ephemeral and the concrete.

As a young man, he found certain satisfactions in his sporadic, four-year-long job as a stereograph salesman, pedaling from town to town in various parts of the country on his bicycle. Yet, during this same period, he was writing poetry and reading Emerson, Boccacio, and Browning. During his lifetime he would ride the rails, live and work with hoboes, talk with and be awarded by various Presidents and the King of Sweden—and seem to gather equal interest and pleasure from these differing ventures. Born of a blacksmith father who could not write his own name, he was, in time, to receive two Pulitzer Prizes for his own writing, one for his biography of a man whose mother could not write her name.

It is not that he changed much during his lifetime. His circumstances, though never ostentatious, did become considerably more comfortable, but hyacinths and biscuits were always a part of his nature



Paula Steichen spent most of her childhood at Connemara, the home of her grandparents, Carl and Lilian Sandburg. Today she lives near Hendersonville with her husband and two children.

From Connemara's porch, the Sandburgs enjoyed the fresh air, the flowers and shrubs, and the distant mountain views.



Sandburg's main-floor study is filled with books and papers, plus other personal trademarks: a cigar, a bandanna, and a cap.

and lifestyle. His belief in himself, his writing, and his destiny never seemed to fail him, even against considerable odds—and it lifted him to greatness in a wide variety of fields. Yet he always preferred his old clothes and the simplest, homemade soups and dark breads. Asked by a *New York Times* reporter what he would do with the gold medal awarded him in 1950 by The National Institute and American Academy of Arts and Letters, he replied: "I'll wear it on the inside of my coat and when a railroad dick stops me and flashes his badge, I'll flash my gold badge right back."

When he and his family moved to Connemara in Flat Rock, North Carolina, in 1945, the Chicago newspapers described the new home as a "historic estate." And, indeed, it is a beautiful place, with tall, aged trees, sweeping pastureland, ponds, wildflowers, and mountain views. Yet the lifestyle that the Sandburg family led there was as basic and simple as the one that my grandmother and my grandfather had written to each other about shortly before their marriage in 1908, when they dreamed of a time when they would have a place called "Three Acres and Liberty" with "a roof, four walls, three chairs (one for company), a hat rack, a breadbox, a bowl for wild flowers and a coffee pot."

Before taking a look at the life and works of Carl Sandburg, come briefly with me to Connemara where the family lived for the last 22 years of my grandfather's life. Let us pick a day in early spring, about five years after the family's move—for there are white hyacinths blooming in the garden beside the gazebo then, and, in the kitchen, standing warm beneath towels in the golden, afternoon light, my mother's bread dough is rising in four tin pans, giving off a gentle yeast scent that reaches past the walls of that sunny room and into the hallway beyond.

The house is a tall white structure built before the Civil War as a summer home for Christopher Memminger, who would become, in time, Secretary of the Confederate Treasury under Jefferson Davis. There are white pillars in front and steps leading up to a broad, comfortable porch where one can stand and look far out onto the range of Blue Ridge Mountains in the distance. In the sloping pasture below the house are the family's horses—in cold



The family often gathered in the living room to sing folk songs or to play or listen to classical music.

weather, fed on the grain and hay left over from the goat herd. A few are for riding, and two large grey Percherons, Pearl and Major, till the soil in spring and draw the manure and lime spreader in fall. In the winter they are hitched to a large, V-shaped, wooden drag that clears the snow from the driveway that winds its way beneath hundred-year-old pines to the dirt county road below.

It is a warm April day, the sky almost clear. Above the flowering shrubs at the edge of the front lawn, bees hum, glad to be at work again after the colder months. Before they had reached the flowers that morning, my grandmother had been there, with a look of contentment on her face, a trowel in one hand, a burlap sack in the other. She had worked until midmorning setting out dahlia bulbs, then going to her lily garden at the side of the house to plant an edging of blue delphiniums and pink petunias. She had come in satisfied—her hands lined with dirt, her white hair struggling to loose itself from the bun at the nape of her neck.

Now, late afternoon, she is in the farm office, answering letters from people who wish to buy one of the spring kids from her well known goat herd. My grandmother knows every goat by name, and the names and records of all their dams, sires, siblings, and ancestors. Her youngest daughter, Helga, who manages the goat herd with her, has put up two billboards in the farm office, and thumbtacked to them are family photos and pictures of the goats, prize-winners and favorites. The tile-floored room is cool and quiet. There are garden catalogues lying around, on the laps of chairs and on the desks, and some new seed packets, bought at the feed store yesterday. On the shelves before my grandmother are books on plants, bees, genetics, and the stars. Occasionally, all the family goes out under the open sky at night before retiring, and the older members point out to the younger ones the brilliant constellations in the expanse above.

Beyond the glass doors of the farm office is the dining room, where the family spends most of its time together. The two end walls of the room are lined with bookshelves from floor to ceiling. There are some 12,000 volumes in the house, and almost every room holds its share. Across the long side of the room are many windows that look beyond the







driveway to the tall hemlocks at the back of the house and the many bird feeders below their limbs. The family keeps the feeders full year round and the birds flock to them. In the winter they attract great numbers of evening grosbeaks and purple finches and cardinals. Once, when my grandmother was asked if it was not expensive to feed the birds so liberally, she looked the inquirer coolly in the eye and said, "We almost never go to movies or to plays and not one of us has ever owned a fur coat. *They* are our luxury!"

Now the dining room is still, the scent of Helga's rising bread loaves slowly entering its door. On the long, cloth-covered table, our napkins wait in napkin rings at our places. One of the Siamese cats lies curled, sleeping, on my grandfather's old leather recliner. In two hours or so the hot loaves of bread will be on the table with a plate of goats' butter, a pitcher of cold milk, a beef stew, and a salad made of lettuce and green onions from the greenhouse next to our living room. We will all gather at the table then, filled with talk about our day.

My mother, her sister Janet, my brother John Carl, and I will have come into dinner from the evening milking and feeding at the barn. There will be the faint scent of the animals and the spring air clinging to us. Though early in the year, our faces will already be tanned, used to the outdoors.

At four we had gone down to the barn. Janet is in charge of feeding the kids, and each day when they see her amongst us, walking down the broad drive to the barnyard, they call out to her, bleating in unison. She pours sweet feed into their troughs and goes to heat large kettles of milk for them on the barn stove. She measures the white liquid into pans lined up in their stanchions, and the kids drink greedily, butting at the milk with their noses in eager delight.

My mother and the caretaker tend to the does, milking and feeding them, then processing the milk and washing down the milking parlor and the milkhouse. The whir of the milk, the clang of the buckets, the sounds of the creatures are everywhere. An old radio in the milking parlor gives the local weather forecast and plays music. John Carl and I move from room to room about the barn. We throw down hay from the loft above and spread it in the long hay manger in the room where the does are



Besides the goats, a few cats, dogs, horses, and an occasional cow or two inhabited the farm.

From her office in the center of the house, Mrs. Sandburg kept the books and records of the goat farm, which spreads across the rolling fields behind the house (pages 10 - 11).

turned after milking. We round up the few elusive does that are shy of the milking room and put milk out for the barn cats and the March litter of kittens.

After the chores are done we all leave the barn. Most of the goats are gathered around the haymow. One hears their chewing and their soft breathing; there is a feeling of peace and completeness as we close the barnyard gate. The caretaker leaves us, going down the short drive to the tenant house where he and his family live. We step off the drive, through the towering old boxwoods, and follow the path to the house. We are met halfway by my Aunt Margaret, who has spent the afternoon reading in her room and who has gone out for a brief walk before dinner. She joins us as we return to the house.

Evening is coming now. We can see the sun moving, low, toward the west. Our voices rise in the April air. We have almost reached the back door. John Carl and I are singing the last song we heard over the radio in the milking parlor: "I'm looking over a four-leaf clover that I overlooked before. . . . "

To our right, beyond the pathway, beyond the hemlocks, beyond our sight, but within hearing of our song and voices, sits my grandfather in his chair that stays on the overlying granite rock at the edge of the woods. He has been there, beneath the sun, working, all afternoon. His shirt collar is turned under and is opened at the neck. There is a dark V of tanned skin there, for he often works outdoors in the afternoons, as he has throughout his lifetime. In the heat of mid-summer one will find him there, also, too involved in his work to move to a shaded spot, his shirt off, his green, newspaperman's visor on, a cigar stub, unlit, between his teeth.

I go to him sometimes where he works, and he is patient with his seven-year-old granddaughter. He praises my way with my horse, Storm, and he is appreciative of the harvest I bring him after a ramble in the woods: wildflowers, acorns, stones. We walk together sometimes and he bends over the bluets growing amongst the mosses on the low side of the Memminger Path and calls me by the nickname he has given me, saying, "See, Snick, they like your toes, the way your toes move and get you where you are going. . . ." His voice is mellow and he stretches the words out, making them deep and personal. I feel our friendship with the tiny, blue flowers.



Throughout the house are boxes, bowls, and cans containing nuts, stones, and other objects picked up on walks through the fields and woods.

The dining room was also the family room—a place to gather for conversation, song, and fellowship.









Sandburg often wore an eyeshade to protect his vision.

In his top-floor office (pages 16-17), he surrounded himself with piles of papers, notes to himself, clippings from newspapers and magazines, and file cabinets.

I have learned the habit from him—of picking up smooth stones and bright leaves from the forest floor. The rooms at Connemara have few art pieces in them, these being primarily the photographs taken by my grandmother's brother, Edward Steichen. But there are bowls in every room that are filled with what we have brought back from our walks. There are oddly shaped sticks, birds' feathers, buckeyes, hickory nuts, and a handful of the perfect, fanshaped ginkgo leaves, golden in fall.

My grandfather's two small rooms on the third floor also hold these treasures. They rest in old cigar boxes there, mixed with broad, stubby, knife-sharpened pencils that he uses in his writing. They are at home in his loft-like rooms.

His workroom, its walls lined with bookcases, has in it filing cabinets, a desk, three chairs and a woodstove. Beyond this, he uses orange crates for furniture, piling them sideways one on top of another to hold books whenever he needs a portable bookshelf; placing them bottoms down to hold sheaves of papers; putting them on end to hold his typewriter. They are light, useful, familiar. The room has a look about it of comfortable, ordered disarray.

The adjoining bedroom has much the same air. The two windows look out over treetops and mountains, giving a feeling of privacy and yet of openness. On the billboard in the room and on parts of the walls are thumbtacked and taped pictures that he has torn from magazines, finding them too interesting or pleasing to his eye to hide away. There are photos of animals and the faces of people from foreign countries, paintings by Cassat, Picasso, Monet, Rembrandt. And, though the pictures vary over time, there is always at least one related to Uncle Ed's photographs, attesting to the deep friendship and respect between the two men that began when my grandparents married. There are also, almost always, some reproductions of Oriental art, for the culture of the Far East has always intrigued my grandfather.

The furniture in the bedroom is like that of the workroom, plain and utilitarian. A small sink is mounted on one wall, a metal towel hanger screwed into the side of the bureau that stands next to it. The simple bed is braced at the foot with a two-by-four.

My grandfather once wrote a poem entitled "Per-

sonalia." If one were to choose one poem as an example of his work, "Personalia" would not be the one to choose. But in it is so much of the author, so much of the man who lived his last 22 years at Connemara, that it is worth printing here:

The personal idiom of a corn shock satisfies me.

So does the attack of a high note by an Australian mezzosoprano.

Also the face and body blow punishment taken by the boiler-maker who won the world's championship belt.

I find majesty in the remembrance of a stump speech by John P. Altgeld explaining his act as governor of Illinois in the pardon of four convicts.

The simple dignity of a child drinking a bowl of milk embodies the fascination of an ancient vite.

The color of redhaws when the last driving rain of October sprays their gypsy crimson against the khaki brown of the blown leaves, the ankle-deep leaves—

If I should be sent to jail I would write of these things, lover of mine.

If I live to a majestic old age becoming the owner of a farm I shall sit under apple trees in the summer and on a pad of paper with a large yellow lead pencil, I shall write of these things, lover of mine.

Carl Sandburg did not sit under apple trees in his old age, but he did sit in his workroom, and, in the afternoons, beside the pines, on the long granite rock—and he wrote of those things. Arriving at Connemara after the age of 67, he was yet to publish more than ten volumes, much of the poetry and prose material being new, the latter including his novel, *Remembrance Rock*, and his autobiography, *Always the Young Strangers*.

Janet is calling for him now from the front porch, her hearty voice reaching far. It is dinner time. He picks up his work materials and the glass which had held his coffee and walks to the house at his easy pace. The family dogs see him coming and hurry to escort him to the door.

Late that evening, after John Carl and 1—and Janet—are in bed, he will go walking with my grandmother, perhaps joined by Helga or Margaret,



Sometimes Sandburg worked in the sunshine on the long granite rock behind the house.



under the sky, in the coolness of the spring night. He will wear a sweater over his shoulders, a scarf around his neck. Their talk will range from Edward R. Murrow's news broadcast to the moon above them. In the bright night, they will not even use a flashlight, the walks so common, the way so familiar.

Years earlier, Carl Sandburg wrote to his wife-tobe, "All the big people are simple, as simple as the unexplored wilderness. They love the universal things that are free to everybody. Light and air and food and love and some work are enough. In the varying phases of these cheap and common things, the great lives have found their joy. . . . so simple we are, so little we want, we are wise and will get what we want. . . ."

It is the essence of the story of this man and his life—a story of hyacinths and biscuits.

Connemara's peaceful setting in the foothills of western North Carolina provided the Sandburgs with some of the "universal things that are free to everybody."







Carl Sandburg was born in this three-room house at 331 East Third Street, Galesburg, Illinois, on January 6, 1878, and lived here until he was about three years old. See page 115 for information on the birthplace.

Growing Up in Galesburg

On January 6, 1878, my grandfather was born on a cornhusk mattress in a three-room, frame house on Third Street in Galesburg, Illinois. He was given the name of Carl August Sandburg at birth, but, soon after, the Carl would be changed to Charles, the family feeling that the latter name would be more acceptable in America. He would go by the name of Charles until his marriage to my grandmother 30 years later.

Both of his parents had emigrated from Sweden only a few years before his birth. The first few hundred words he would learn would be Swedish, and his father would call him "Sholly," with a broad Swedish accent, for the rest of his life. Young Charlie would grow up seeing his father read the *Swedish Register*, mailed from Stockholm, and the family would regularly attend the Swedish Lutheran Church services.

His father had come from a northern province of Sweden, where there were many so-called "black Swedes"—their hair and eyes being black. August Sandburg's parents had died when he was young and he had been forced to abandon schooling and become a choreboy, and, later, a teamster, in a brewery in Sweden. In the old country, his surname had been Danielsson, or Sturm, or Johnson. The facts are unclear, but he did adopt the name of Sandburg after arriving in America.

The father had known poverty, and perhaps it was this that had caused a streak of hardness in the man. Laughter and sympathy came seldom to him. He worked as a helper at the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy blacksmith shop in Galesburg, never taking a vacation, working from 7 until 6, always on time, the year round. When he was not at work at the railroad shop, he was working at home—on a pump, or a cistern, or the coal shed. During the time that Charlie was growing up, the father moved the family several times, at last seeing them live in a modest but spacious home in Galesburg where they had rooms to let out to a policeman or a carpenter.

August Sandburg was a hardworking, intent man, single-minded and somber. He wasted little time in play or jokes with his children. He would never understand his eldest son, either as a child, or later as a writer. My grandfather has written of an inci-

dent that tells much about their relationship in those early years. The recollection is of a time when my grandfather was just learning to read. He was walking, before five o'clock in the morning, beside his father to the Julotta services at the church. His hand was in his father's. "I had been reading in the books about the stars," he recalled, "and I had this early morning been taking a look now and then up at a sky of clear stars. And at this place where a driveway went out onto Chambers Street, I turned my face up toward my father's and said, pointing with the loose hand, 'You know, some of those stars are millions of miles away.' And my father, without looking down said, 'We won't bodder about dat now, Sholly.' For several blocks neither of us said a word and I felt, while still holding his hand, that there were millions of empty miles between us. . . . "

How different could a father and son be? My grandfather's father, though he could read Swedish, refused to learn to read English, and, never, during a lifetime, learned to write his own name. He made his mark with an "X" and felt that that was adequate.

My great-grandmother was a different story. Her maiden name was Clara Mathilda Anderson. Years later, my grandfather would say that she had fair hair, "the color of oat straw just before the sun tans it—eyes light blue, the skin white as fresh linen by candlelight, the mouth for smiling. . . ." It was she who used to say to her half-grown, eldest son, "Who knows, you might make something of yourself, Charlie." And it was she who bought for her children a *Cyclopaedea of Important Facts of the World* and, later, *A History of the World and its Great Events.* The father was furious, demanding, "Wot good iss dat book!" after he had calmed down.

My grandfather would dedicate his efforts in his first, small, hand-printed book, In Reckless Ecstasy. to his mother, saying, "I dedicate them to one who has kept a serene soul in a life of stress, wrested beauty from the commonplace, and scattered her gladness without stint or measure: MY MOTHER." And she would write to him, years after that, upon receiving a copy of his book of poetry, Slabs of the Sunburnt West, "Dearest Sweetest and most beloved of all! I thank you a thousend times for the beutifull book the pretty covers as well as inside arengement. Oh how we all feel the fullness of gratitude to you

and gladness that your patient work have ended in a so large and so pretty book. I wish I could give something or do something in return. . . . Wish I could run over with a dozen eggs now and then we have so much of them. This is just my feeling. I only stand bewildered and would praise God for having moulded his clay into a so beutiful piece of ornamet in his kingdom. With much love from all of us as ever yours, Mother."

During those growing years in Galesburg, there were nine members of the Sandburg family, until the two youngest boys, Emil and Freddie, died of diphtheria, the deaths coming just days apart. Many of those years fell during "Hard Times," the depression of the late 1800s. There was a lengthy period during which August Sandburg was partially laid off from his job, and the family was grateful for the garden that he always tended—for the potatoes and carrots and cabbages that young Charlie learned to dig and store when he was still wearing dresses.

My grandfather used to sing a song with great gusto to me and my brother when we were young. Its lines surely held more meaning for him than the whimsical meaning they held for me:

"Cabbages, cabeans and carrots, Carrots, cabeans and cabbages, Sweetest of flowers, I love you so, I love to sit and watch you grow.

Some people like rhododendrons, And some forget-me-nots. But what I like best is a dish of cabeef With cabbages, cabeans and carrots!"

During all those early years of my grandfather's life, there was an understanding that hard work was a part of existence. Since he was the elder of the two surviving boys, he was his father's primary assistant in the early years; his brother, Mart, later helped, too. For the yearly cleaning of the cistern, Charlie was let down, barelegged, by a rope, to shovel the mud and silt from the bottom. And he often held a lantern into the night for his father, leaving behind the book he had been reading. He had everyday duties, too, like all boys at that time—getting in the coal, carrying out the ashes, spading the garden.

Galesburg during those years was a mingling of Yankees and new immigrant families: Swedes, Ger-



The Sandburgs lived in their third Galesburg house, on Berrien Street, from 1882 to 1899, the years of Carl's boyhood.

Sandburg left school after graduating from the eighth grade and held a variety of odd jobs to help support the family. He worked for dairies, a racetrack, a barbershop, a bottling plant, and countless other businesses.





Sandburg's father, August, was born about 1846 in Sweden and came to the United States when he was 10. He worked as a railroad blacksmith in Galesburg.

mans, Irish, Italians. My grandfather's friends came from a wide variety of backgrounds. A group of boys, he being one of them, called themselves The Dirty Dozen. Together they played mumblety-peg, two-old-cat, choose-up, knocking-up-flies, and shinny. Their bat was a broom handle and the ball was a five-cent rubber ball wrapped round with grocery string. There was a time when Charlie Sandburg had a yearning to be a major league baseball player, and for the rest of his life he would enjoy the game and admire its great players.

His father was skeptical of formal education, so Charlie quit school at the end of eighth grade. He wrote that "from then on until several years later, what schooling I got was outside of schools, from reading books, newspapers, magazines, from watching and listening to many kinds of people. . . ." He discovered that detective stories—"were mostly tricks" while the "Chicago morning papers had the real thing."

The two books that held his interest the most during this early period were *The Life of Munson Long, Gambler* and *A Brief History of the United States*. He seems to have had an early interest in words and the mysteries that they could unfold. He later described the history book as being "stuffy and hifalutin in style, yet . . . every page had footnotes with anecdotes that were fascinating, that carried you along better than the main text."

Small-town life held a variety of experiences for the young Charles Sandburg. He held down a newspaper route and often stopped at the end of it to play checkers with an expert, Mr. Doyle, who was one of his customers. He sometimes hung around the Galesburg courthouse to hear the trials and went to the Salvation Army hall to hear the singing. He learned the polka and waltz at a local hall, to the tune of fiddlers, and, like all the boys, he went to the "Old Settler's Picnics." He was put in jail for four hours once, when he and other members of The Dirty Dozen were caught swimming nude in an old brickyard pond on the outskirts of town. He learned to play chords on a banjo from a friend who came from Kentucky, and he bought himself a two-dollar banjo from the pawnshop on Main Street.

Throughout these years he held jobs of one kind or another. First there were the odd jobs: working in people's gardens, cleaning the brick from demolished



Clara Mathilda Anderson, Sandburg's mother, was born in 1850 in Sweden and came to the United States when she was 23.

homes, distributing handbills from 8 to 6 for 25 cents a day. Then, when he was 11, he had his first regular paying job, doing janitorial work for a real estate firm, cleaning spittoons and sweeping and filling the big bottles in the prescription room from the barrels in the cellar. He "portered" in a barbershop for awhile, shining shoes, washing windows, mopping floors, cleaning the brass cuspidors.

More than once, my grandfather had a milk wagon route, seven days a week, receiving \$12 a month and dinner. It was when he was working as a "milk slinger" for Sam Barlow that he was asked by his boss at the dinner table, "Well, young man, do you think you have had sufficient to suffonsify?" Seventy years later, sitting at the dining table at Connemara, my brother and I would imitate our grandfather, we children proud of the sound of the words, "I've had sufficient to suffonsify!"

It was while working for Mr. Barlow, too, that young Charlie first began to form his political opinions. Later he remembered, "One day with our milk delivered and driving back to the barn, I talked a long streak to Sam Barlow about the rich being too rich and the poor being too poor, farmers losing their farms on account of mortgages and low prices for their wheat, corn and cattle, millions of workers in the cities who couldn't get jobs, hell to pay all down the line and how it was going to end and what was to come?" He began to follow politics then, watching the campaign of William Jennings Bryan through the newspapers.

His older sister, Mary, told him he ought to be a lawyer, after hearing him argue politics. She was continuing her education, intent on being a teacher, and she loaned Charlie the books she was studying in school—Irving's *Sketch Book, Ivanhoe, The Scarlet Letter*—and she discussed them with him. But it was not these books that truly caught his interest. "The great book Mary brought home—great for what it did to me at that particular time, opening my eyes about law, government, history, and people—was *Civil Government in the United States*, by John Fiske."

While harboring some vague thoughts about becoming a journalist one day, my grandfather tried out several trades that were familiar to everyone in Galesburg. He had a short bout at learning the tinner's business, then went on to washing bottles in

a pop bottling works, then to learning the potter's skill, then to working as a water boy for the mules and men who graded the hills where the trolley cars ran. He worked in a boathouse renting out rowboats at 25 cents an hour and selling refreshments. He worked for an ice company as a "floater" and then in the icehouse, stacking the cakes of ice. He carried water, ran errands, and helped sponge and dry the sweating horses at the Williams racetrack. It was there that he saw the mare Alix run, breaking the world's record for trotters. Decades later, he would look back on that day and write a poem that would become famous. In it would be the lines:

....at sundown, gray dew creeping on the sod and sheds,
I see Alix again:
Dark, shining-velvet Alix,
Night-sky Alix in a gray blanket,
Led back and forth....
Velvet and night-eyed Alix
With slim legs of steel.
And I want to rub my nose against the nose of the mare Alix.

Standing at the track, watching Alix run, he could not know, of course, what these years were doing to him, what the people he knew, their days and their dreams, were whispering to him. What he saw then was that he was 19 years old and that he had not found a job or a girl that held him. He would write later of that time in his life, when he was "moving out of boy years into a grown young man." The one thing he knew by then was that "to all the best men and women I had known in my life and especially all the great ones that I had read about, life wasn't easy, life had often its bitter and lonely hours, and when you grow with new strengths of body and mind it is by struggle."

"I was groping," he wrote, "I was to go on groping." And so, in June of 1897, he decided to take his chances and go west as a hobo—to see lands and people whose names he could not call. It was still "Hard Times" and there were many men on the road, a portion of them being heads of families who had been forced out of their jobs, who were traveling in search of work in the grain fields and fruit orchards. My grandfather would meet these men, and he would meet professional hoboes, panhandlers, thieves, bums, and tramps. And he would learn

things about himself. He left Galesburg "with my hands free, no bag or bundle, wearing a black sateen shirt, coat, vest and pants, a slouch hat, good shoes and socks, no underwear, in my pockets a small bar of soap, a razor, a comb, a pocket mirror, two handkerchiefs, a piece of string, needles and thread, a Waterbury watch, a knife, a pipe and a sack of tobacco, three dollars and twenty-five cents in cash." His father scowled in disapproval. His mother kissed him and cried.

He jumped a freight car and watched the rails, the towns, the states spin away. He was a hobo, not a tramp; he worked his way. He went from house to house in one town with a brush and some asphaltum in a tomato can, blacking rusting stoves for 25 cents apiece or supper. He picked pears and apples. He worked as a waiter in Keokuk and on a railroad section gang at Bean Lake, Missouri. In Kansas City he worked as a dishwasher; in the wheat fields of western Kansas, on threshing crews. He slept in 15-cent flophouses where "flat brown creepers . . . had homes in the blankets," in hobo jungles under the cool night sky, in boxcars, and once or twice in an empty jail cell.

Twice he was nearly killed fighting sleep while riding the bumpers. And once he was beaten up by a brakeman who then told him as he lay sprawled on the floor, "You can ride, you've earned it." He was given a suit of clothes, "the best I had had in my life," at one home where he chopped wood in exchange for dinner. He shared bread, coffee, weenies, and stories in the moon-lit hobo jungles.

Throughout it all, he held his own. "I was meeting fellow travelers and fellow Americans. What they were doing to my heart and mind, my personality, I couldn't say then nor later and be certain. I was getting a deeper self-respect than I had had in Galesburg, so much I knew."

In October, he headed home to Galesburg, back "to the only house in the United States where I could open a door without knocking and walk in for a kiss from the woman of the house....

"What had the trip done to me. I couldn't say. It had changed me. . . . Away deep in my heart now I had hope as never before. Struggles lay ahead, I was sure, but whatever they were I would not be afraid of them."

Soldier and Student

After his return to Galesburg, Charlie drove a milk wagon again, boarding at the dairy farm, rising at 4:30 every morning, tending to the horses, and milking 22 cows with his boss. He would drive the team into town, pour the milk out to his customers in pint and quart measures, and then drive the wagon back to the farm, letting the horses set their own slow pace while he read in the Chicago Record a twocolumn series of home lectures written by University of Chicago professors on subjects ranging from history, politics, and government to literature. After supper, he would read, too, borrowing books and magazines from the family's shelves. Still in search of a trade though, he left the dairy farm after several months and apprenticed to a house painter, who gave him the job of sandpapering day in and day out. My grandfather was restless.

During the early winter months of 1898, the little town of Galesburg, like much of America, was concerned over the Spanish government's hold on Cuba. When the battleship *Maine* was blown up in February and President McKinley declared war, the whole town turned out to see their boys off to the war. The *Republican Register* reported, "The scene growing out of their departure was one such as is witnessed but few times in the life of a generation."

Among the members of Company C, Sixth Infantry Regiment of Illinois Volunteers, was Private Charles A. Sandburg, who had enlisted on April 26, 1898. From Galesburg, he would be moved to Falls Church, Virginia, for two months of drilling, then on to South Carolina, where on July 11 the soldiers sailed on the *Rita*, stopping in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, then landing on the southern coast of Puerto Rico on July 25.

The members of the regiment would rarely fire a shot except in training, but they would learn the meaning of endurance. They marched under the Puerto Rican sun in blue, woolen, Civil War uniforms, picked "graybacks" out of the seams of their clothes, slapped mosquitoes, and slept in the close air of their rubber ponchos to find some relief from the insects. They became familiar with the symptoms of malaria, and the sight of a man going down from heat exhaustion. They ate hardtack, tinned beef called "Red Horse," and canned beans, and



At the outbreak of the Span ish-American War, Sandburg enlisted in the Illinois Volunteers and was sent to Puerto Rico—where he mostly fought mosquitoes.

most of the volunteers lost 9 to 14 kilograms (20 to

30 pounds) that summer.

Of that war, Private Charlie Sandburg later wrote, "When Peter Finley Dunne had Mr. Dooley referring to 'Gin'ral Miles' gran' picnic and moonlight excursion to Porther Ricky, he had probably had a tenderloin steak garnished with onions before he took up his writing for the day. When Richard Harding Davis wrote that for the troops under General Miles 'Porto Rico was a picnic' he was remembering the dry corners he slept in, the roads where he never walked carrying fifty pounds in a baking sun, the mosquitoes that never bled him nor closed an eye for him, the graybacks he never picked from an inhabited shirt, the rains he never stood in waiting for the rain to let down. And we can be sure that if the elegant straight nose of his handsome face had ever had a sniff of 'Red Horse' he would have put a few lines about it in what he wrote and added that as picnics go, the war in Porto Rico, while not bloody, was a dirty and lousy affair while it lasted."

For my grandfather, it lasted until the end of September. Then he was back in Galesburg, having seen New York City, the Capitol in Washington, the Atlantic, and foreign soil. More importantly, he now had some idea of what the next year might hold, for on the transport coming home, a fellow private had asked him if he would enter Lombard College, in Galesburg, if the school would give him free tuition. One of the two Lombard students in Company C had died of malarial fever at mustering-out time. The college decided to let Charles A. Sandburg enroll immediately as a "special student."

The next spring, he would have another educational opportunity offered to him as a result of the months he spent in the blue, woolen uniform. In early May of 1899, his officers from Company C would nominate him as a candidate for West Point, selecting him out of 90 men. As he later said, "I had never had any dreams about being a general, colonel, or major, but there was a pull about it. If I didn't pass I would come back to Lombard. There was something about the way the Company C officers picked me out of 90 and more others—I had to go along with them. . . . It was like they were pinning an award of merit on me, a private, never even a corporal."

So he boarded the smoking-car at the Galesburg



station, settling into the wicker seats, and he rode east again. At West Point he spent several days taking admission tests. "I fished the deepest I could in my head for the answers. What is a verb? Of course I knew what a verb is. I could tell any time when I was using a verb or somebody else was. I could tell a verb a mile off. But was I putting in black ink on white paper what the grammar book says a verb is? I hoped I was remembering what the grammar book said as I scribbled on the paper, knowing that if a better answer came at midnight it would do me no good."

When the results of the tests came out, my grandfather was told that he was "deficient in arithmetic and grammar," and so he headed home, seeing the Hudson River on his way back and stopping off at Niagara Falls.

At Lombard College, his friends called him "Cully." He worked as a "call-man" at the Prairie Street Fire Department throughout the period that he attended college. He slept at night on the second floor of the station house, riding his bicycle in the mornings to classes, and—if he heard the fire siren—leaving classes and pedaling to the fire. He ate his meals at home, coming through the kitchen door to his mother's rich smile. She had never thought that one of her children would go to college. Putting herring and potatoes before him, placing her hand on his shoulder, she would say in her soft, Swedish accent, "You do the best you can, Charlie, and maybe you can make a name for yourself. It don't do any hurt to try."

The family was living in a new house by then, a larger home with a parlor complete with a piano that Mary had bought with her schoolteacher's wages. Charlie was given a room at the end of a hall in which to do his studying—and he went there in the evenings and on weekends when he was not at work or helping his father at odd jobs. The room was 1.5 by 3.5 meters (5 by 8 feet) and had one window looking out on Berrien Street. There was no register in the room, and in very cold weather he wore a turtleneck sweater, a coat, and overcoat. There he read and wrote college papers and letters. At 10 o'clock he would go back to the fire station to sleep.

Of himself during this time, he later said, "I was a human struggler in a new loneliness good to know



Lombard Prof. Philip Green Wright encouraged Sandburg as a young writer. Lombard became a part of another Galesburg college, Knox, in 1930.

Sandburg, standing at right, played on the Lombard College basketball team and one year was captain.

myself filling some definite niche in what is called a career . . . I knew I liked writing. . . ."

At Lombard he was enrolled in classes in Latin, English, inorganic chemistry, elocution, drama, and public speaking. He was reading Robert Browning, Dryden (whom he did not like), Thomas Carlyle, and Robert Burns. "We near wept over Burns," he wrote years later.

He read Francis Bacon, John Bunyan, Addison,

and good to grapple with for whatever might come of it... in my little hallroom, I had wonderings and hopes but they were vague and foggy. I couldn't see

He read Francis Bacon, John Bunyan, Addison, and Steele. And he read Charles Lamb, whose family had known their share of madness. He later wrote of Lamb, "His essays, poems, letters... breathe a rare sanity...." He bought for ten cents a secondhand book that fitted into his hip pocket, *The Last Essays of Elia*, by Charles Lamb. Later, at Connemara, he still had the book, saying of it, "I go to it like some people who at times must have nippy cheese and beer..." It was during his college years that he began the habit of buying used books and used them so much that many still show the mark of having spent time in a hip pocket, a vest pocket, or a bicycle basket.

The stress in the literature courses at Lombard was primarily on English authors, rather than Americans. Later my grandfather wondered over the fact that there was "No Benjamin Franklin, no Whitman, Thoreau, Melville, Poe, no Jefferson, Hamilton, Lincoln, no Emily Dickinson, or Harriet Beecher Stowe, no Clay, Webster, Calhoun, no Artemus Ward, Bret Harte, Mark Twain." Yet it was while going to college that he first bought a copy of *Leaves of Grass*, learning of it in a book of essays by Brander Matthews.

And it was at college that he first began writing on a regular basis. He attended classes taught by Professor Philip Green Wright, reading Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Turgenev. Professor Wright, economist, mathematician, scholar, author, was later called by my grandfather one of the great influences of his life. During the winter months at Lombard, "Cully" Sandburg would gather with other students on Sunday night at Wright's house, and there would be discussion and readings from Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Kipling. He would choose for his readings George



The Cannibal, Lombard College's yearbook, listed Sandburg in 1901 as the editing manager...

Ade's fables, Richard Whiting's novel about the London slums, *Number Five John Street*, and Elbert Hubbard's *The Philistine*.

In Sandburg's last year at college, Professor Wright organized The Poor Writers' Club, saying that the members "are poor, and we are writers, so why not?" It was made up of Wright, Sandburg, and two other Lombard students who were serious about writing. They discussed each other's work and talked over ways to improve it.

As poor as my grandfather may have been, he never seemed to fit the pale image that so often is thrust upon poets. He played right guard for the Lombard basketball team for four seasons, serving as captain during the latter part of this time. The college newspaper would report of one game, "At no period could either side claim the game, for up until the last few seconds it was a tie with the score 10 to 10, when Captain Sandburg threw a difficult goal from under the basket and saved the day."

He paid his tuition during the second year of college by doing janitorial work at the college, which included ringing the class bells. He would leave his classes seven or eight minutes early and go to the bell tower; then, at five minutes to the hour, he would pull the rope, and again five minutes later when it was time for classes to begin. In the belltower were stacked the overflow books from the college library. He read them when he had the time.

Besides his job as call man at the fire station, he earned money during the college years by dressing chickens and turkeys at the local meat market. He picked apples in the autumn, and, during one fall and winter, he tended daily to the horse and buggy of a local doctor for a dollar fifty a week. "The doctor was just beginning practice," he later recalled, "and sometimes, for effect on the sick and the well, he would drive here and there over the town at a furious pace as though on an emergency call." During this time, also, he and his friend. Frederick Dickinson, had the college agency for celluloid collars, wearing them as long as they were agents, then doing without.

As part pay for tuition in 1901, Sandburg and Dickinson were asked by Lombard's President Nash to edit and publish a *College Year Book* in celebration of Lombard's 50th birthday. The book was



...and Frederick Dickinson as the managing editor.

called *The Cannibal* and under Dickinson's photo was "Managing Editor" and under Sandburg's was "Editing Manager." Later, my grandfather commented, "We had made a book with a hundred jokes and skits that couldn't possibly have any meaning to people outside the college family or clan, but we had edited and written thousands of words, had practiced at biography and history, had learned about type, zinc and half-tone cuts, proofreading, and the ways of printers. We had met and corresponded with Very Important People. Dickinson and I knew we had learned as much from the work as in any of the courses in the college."

In the spring of 1901, he was elected editor of *The Lombard Review*. Below the front cover name, he added the words "A Live College Journal." He described the paper later, saying, "What was to come might be loud, slangy, even undignified, but it would be LIVE—that was the intention and with no insinuations about predecessors." In this *Lombard Review*, he would sign his writings alternately "Charles August Sandburg" and "Karl August."

He was also Lombard's reporter for the *Galesburg Evening Mail*, covering all college events and occasionally non-college weddings or funerals, or doing interviews. He grew to know the editor and reporters. Throughout this period, his writing was taking on its own distinctive style. Even in his earliest college papers and his letters, the essence of Carl Sandburg's later style is clearly recognizable.

In the spring of 1902, before graduating, my grandfather left Lombard. He looked back 60 years later and said of that spring, "Where was I going? These jobs, contacts, activities, what were they doing to me? Was I growing or getting anywhere? I believed I was, though I couldn't say how or wherein . . . I was happy yet restless with an endless unrest. . . . What was I headed for? . . . I was only sure that in the years ahead I would read many books and I would be a writer and try my hand at many kinds of writing. It was about this time that my brother Mart heard me say, and went around quoting it, 'I'm either going to be a writer—or a bum!'"

Stereographs, Socialism, and Public Speaking

It would be some years before my grandfather would know exactly where he was going. And it is doubtful Frederick Dickinson, left, and Sandburg sold stereoscopes and stereograph views in the countryside around Galesburg in the summer of 1900.



if he was ever to be totally free of that "endless unrest" that he felt in the spring of 1902. When I was a child growing up at Connemara, there were, in the big white house, many clues to those years of my grandfather's quest—those years that immediately followed his college years.

I used to climb, sometimes alone or with my brother, the stairway that led to the upper story of our house. The steps seemed immensely broad at my young age, and the climb long. Still, when my mother was painting and my grandmother and aunts were in town and my grandfather was out on the rock above the house with his papers and stubs of pencils, the silence and mysteries held there on the third story would call to me.

There on the cool, wide planks that formed the flooring, my brother and I would sit, propping ourselves against the books that surrounded us. The overflow Lincoln library was there, and a section of song books, and there were stacks of records designed to be played on a wind-up Victrola. There, too, in the dim light of the skylight, were the twin bulges of the many cases of stereoscopic photographs, and there were several old stereoscopes, always dust-laden. Some of the latter were of simple design, wood and glass. Others were more ornate, with touches of velvet and silver. When you looked through these "scopes," the "views" became three dimensional, giving life to the cultures and faces of strangers, to herds of African animals, to scenes and soldiers of the American Civil War.

The Lombard Review of September 1901 had reported that "propagandists of the stereoscopic idea last summer were Messrs. Dickinson and Sandburg . . . the two representing Underwood and Underwood in southeastern Michigan. . . . Stereographs as seen through a good glass are the best possible substitute for travel. They bring a scene before the eyes with startling reality and impart much of the inspiration that the original scene would. . . ."

Sprawling there in the quiet outside our grandfather's bedroom door, we only sensed that the "scopes" and "views" were echoes of years past. We never suspected then the extent to which they had been comrades in a searching and a wandering that was to mark our grandfather for the rest of his days.

He had first canvassed for Underwood and Un-

derwood throughout the countryside surrounding Galesburg in the summer of 1900. He and his friend Dickinson had worked together, pedaling their bicycles from farm to farm and village to village, often making a sale of only one or two "views" per family. It was a way of earning money that seemed to agree with them. As they rode over the countryside, they argued politics, read books and newspapers, and discussed what interested them. They sat down to meals with their customers, coming to know the people in the towns and on the farms.

After leaving college in the spring of 1902, my grandfather continued to sell the stereoscopes and views, that summer covering territory in Wisconsin with Dickinson. It was a time in Wisconsin's history when the people were talking about LaFollette, who stood against "big money" and the established bosses of his Republican party. Charlie Sandburg would hear some people calling LaFollette "a wild socialist," while others openly adored him, and he would find himself agreeing with much that LaFollette stood for, while Dickinson formed more conservative opinions. He would tell Dickinson a joke he had come across in Life Magazine: "Who made the world? God made the world in 4004 B.C., but it was reorganized in 1901 by James J. Hill, J. Pierpont Morgan, and John D. Rockefeller."

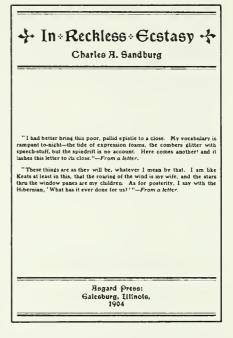
In September of that year, Dickinson went on to law school, while his friend went on selling Underwood and Underwood views. My grandfather would do so, fairly steadily, for the next three years, and would find the need to return to this nomadic profession, off and on, for three more years after that. It was an occupation that offered him the freedom to ramble, think, read, write, and meet the people and the countryside of America. Besides the Midwest, he covered territory in Delaware and New Jersey, seeing the East and visiting Walt Whitman's house and tomb in Camden, New Jersey. Traveling back home, he was once taken off a coal car with five others and jailed for ten days in Pittsburgh, charged with riding a railroad train without a ticket.

He worried, sometimes, about his future. His father was disapproving and the rest of his family doubtful about the path he was taking. Yet Sandburg had a kind of confidence in himself and what he was doing. He wrote to his sister, Mary, in 1903, "I am

passing through a kind of apprenticeship in . . . dealing with people. I could go into some world old work at or near home that would reflect more honor on the name Sandburg than that in which I am engaged now. But it takes time for big results. . . . I am a fool, but I know which way I am going. . . . I must do my work and carry on my studies . . . believe me always. Yours with deep brotherly love, Charlie."

He ate and lived simply during these years, as he always would, buying bananas for a dime a dozen and a loaf of stale bread for a nickel. This, along with cheese, occasional cold meat, and whatever fruit or vegetable was in season, formed his meals. He would canvass for orders two or three days a week, sometimes less, spending the rest of his time walking, often 13 to 19 kilometers (8 to 12 miles) a day, and reading under the trees at the edges of the towns. He read Shakespeare, Emerson, Whitman, Ibsen, and Zola's Nana and Drink. He reread parts of the Bible, too: the Book of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the four gospels and Saint Paul to the Corinthians. His hopes for the future were still vague, but his ideas were becoming clear. He recalled in later years, "In Smyrna, Delaware, I read in Carlyle of a man shaving one morning, scraping his face and throat with a razor; he had a tough beard and had to shave every morning and it came over him that life would be damned monotonous shaving every morning as long as he lived so he ran the razor across his throat and was pleased to bleed to death. What killed him? Monotony. I would study about monotony and whatever I died of it was not going to be monotony."

He wrote many letters to his friend, Professor Wright, at Lombard during these years. In one he explained his life as a canvasser, saying that he was also a "scholar, a poet-taster, an athlete and a social lion (or cub)." He needed the freedom to move and to think as he wished, and he wanted the contact that his rambles gave him with the land. He wrote later of those days, "I rode the country roads on a rented bicycle. I did well among the farmers, lingered over ripe tomatoes, serene orchards and the haze of autumn over spaces of landscape where I could see the trees said they were putting on the last bright spectacle of the year. . . I was never so sentimental about the changing blazes of falltime leaves, in



One hundred copies of Sandburg's first book. In Reckless Ecstasy, were printed in 1904 in Professor Philip Wright's basement. The book contained both prose and poetry.

colors never the same from day to day. I lingered at roadsides and wrote poems—the poems not so good but I had the lingering and that was good."

As the seasons passed, he was writing more and more, experimenting with all kinds of formal verse: sonnets, triolets, ballads, long and short rhymed verse. Then came experiments of his own; he began to form his own poetic style. In December of 1904, Philip Green Wright's Asgard Press, operating in the basement of the professor's house, published 100 copies of Sandburg's first book, *In Reckless Ecstasy*. It contained five prose pieces and sixteen poems, half of the latter in free verse form and half in rhymed, conventional form.

It was the unpolished aspect of the free verse poetry that made the little book most interesting to its readers. The hometown Lombard Review said of it, "The Sandburg volume is characterized by an almost startling vigor and strength; some of the passages are of surpassing beauty and, withal, is revealed a strong mind and character in the author the reader who likes easy-going rhymes and counted syllables will be disappointed. Pegasus has been 'busted' in true Whitman style. What wonder, then, if he sometimes shies, stumbles, or jumps stiffnecked? . . . we predict a favorable reception in literary circles far wider than our own college horizon."

Despite the excitement of seeing his first book in print, the winter of 1904-05 was a difficult one for Charles Sandburg. His future seemed even less clear than before, and he was torn between his desire to write and his "business" of selling stereographs. He was living in Aurora, just west of Chicago, in a one-dollar-a-week room with no heat. In the mornings he would break the ice in his pitcher, take a sponge bath, boil two eggs over his sterno lamp and eat them with bread or apples or oranges. He was 27 and he felt that dreaded monotony, of which Carlyle had written, creeping into his life. He doubted that he was getting anywhere, either in business or in writing.

It was a mixed winter of doubts, hopes, and searching. He spent a good deal of time in the heated public library reading a wide variety of literature, and he tried two nights as a vaudeville comedian with a thick Swedish accent, appearing in a red

stocking-cap and lumber jacket. His hometown newspaper, The Galesburg Evening Mail, was printing occasional prose pieces of his, entitled "Inklings and Idlings," and he began to submit poems and articles to several publications. The new monthly magazine, To-Morrow, used some of his poems. The first, which appeared in the February issue, he had written in a trolley-car and had sent off at once. Then three more appeared in the March issue, with these words from the editor of the magazine, Oscar Lovell Triggs, coming soon after: "Charles A. Sandburg is a young man unknown to fame, but if one may judge by the few poems he has written, he will not remain long in obscurity when once his quality is appreciated. Unstudied and artless these poems are, but they are vibrant with poetic energy." My grandfather wrote home to Mary, "I have been writing when I felt the mood and business has gone to the dogs."

That spring his brother, Mart, wrote him that there was a job opening at the Brooks Street Fire Department in Galesburg, three blocks from the Sandburg home, if he wished to take it. He would have the duties of grooming and exercising the horses, oiling the harnesses, polishing the combination hose-cart with ladders, and keeping the station clean. He would need to be available to rush off to any fires, but his free time would be his own. Mart encouraged his brother to come back to Galesburg, "What you want is plenty of time to read and write and you can do that in the fire station and you won't have to fuss around and worry about that damn view business."

Charlie came home, took the job, and bought a secondhand Blickensderfer typewriter for \$15, setting it up in his corner of the upper story of the firehouse. He began to write editorials for the Galesburg Labor News, often speaking out on the subject of socialism. Jack London, too, was writing on socialism then in a different part of America and my grandfather was reading him. He said of London in an editorial, "It is the common man for whom Jack London pleads and as he pleads he wants it understood that he too is a common man. Nor is it merely a plea he makes. It is also a threat, 'The threat of socialism'. . . . There . . . you have Jack London. Not Gerald Throckmorton London, nor Francis Felix Quebec London. But just everyday

In 1907 Professor Wright's Asgard Press published Incidentals, a small collection of Sandburg essays.



Jack! . . . If he were not a Common Man I would call him a Great Man."

Young Sandburg read Robert Louis Stevenson, Tolstoy, Charles Lamb, Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Upton Sinclair. And he also read the poets, his favorites from the 1800s being Emily Dickinson, Stephen Crane, and Walt Whitman. He memorized some of their poems and also Thomas Gray's poem, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." He was writing more poetry, too, continuing to type up copies and send them off to editors, receiving more rejection letters than acceptances. He was beginning to lecture that spring, running up to Chicago with Mart sometimes on the Adams Express Company railroad car that went regularly between Chicago and Galesburg. The To-Morrow people ran the Spencer-Whitman Center in Chicago and he gave one lecture there that spring called "The Uses of Poetry." It was received well, a review saying that the young speaker "pointed out some of the beauties of the commonplace and brought out a very lively discussion of the 'utility of beauty.'"

My grandfather stayed on with the fire department the rest of that year, but the new year found him restless and determined to plunge into some new work, some new environment. In early spring he hitched a ride, again with the Adams Express Company car, for which Mart worked, and he headed for

Chicago to try his luck.

The next few years held for Charles Sandburg a series of jobs and experiences that were partly determined by fate, partly by the restless nature of the young poet. It was a time when his abilities as a lecturer and a writer would develop greatly, while his interest and dependence on an active career in business would decline and finally disappear for the rest of his days. He found during this time that he was less and less satisfied with an occupation that was not a direct expression of his creative instincts. He wrote to Professor Wright, "There is a place for me somewhere, where I can write and speak much as I can think, and make it pay for my living and some besides. Just where this place is I have small idea now, but I am going to find it. . . ."

He barely earned a living during these years, but, though he worried, he also seemed to relish each new turn that fate took. His confidence in a kind of

destiny for himself rarely waned. It may have been the constant trying out of his own abilities; it may have been his love for variety in people and surroundings; it may have been that there was a perceptible increase in acceptance of his talents. Whatever the case, my grandfather was not an easily discouraged man. He sent a letter to Wright at one point, saying, "While at present see barely expenses, a future looms up big with mighty fates and hopes. My future is not behind but careening like blazes ahead of me. . . . No man can say what the morrow bringeth forth." And, again after losing a job and finding himself without work, he wrote in his private notebook, "Sometimes when fate kicks us and we finally land and look around, we find we have been kicked upstairs!"

After he said goodby to Mart in Chicago, he visited the *To-Morrow* offices. The publisher and manager of the magazine, Parker H. Sercombe, was also the secretary of their lecture bureau, and he had heard Charles Sandburg lecture earlier that spring and had seen some of his poems. He offered him a job editing and proofreading manuscripts, the pay to consist of room and board. My grandfather accepted and stayed with the To-Morrow people until December of 1906, when he went on to work for The Lyceumite, a platform magazine. Here he was paid \$25 a week and given the title of associate editor. He wrote a regular series called "Unimportant Portraits of Important People," and he met all kinds of people in the platform profession. He later wrote of some of these performers, calling them "some of the most hifalutin hypocrites, demagogues and tricksters that I had ever met. . . ." There was one man in particular that he admired and enjoyed—a Viennese magician advertised as "Joseffy the Great-a prestidigitator, ventriloguist and master of the art of illusion." Some years later Sandburg wrote a small book on Joseffy, which was published by the Asgard Press.

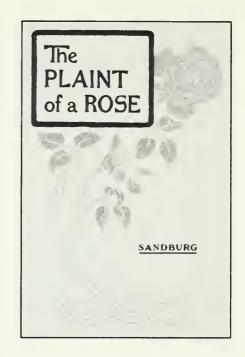
The Lyceumite proved willing to publish several poems and short prose pieces by Charles Sandburg. One, entitled "Don't Worry," is an interesting reflection of his spirit and of his growing style during this period. It reads: "I want to do the right thing, but often don't know just what the right thing is. I am making mistakes and expect to make more. Every day I know I have bungled and blundered and come

short of what I would like to have done. Yet as the years pass on and I see the very world itself, with its oceans and mountains and plains as something unfinished, a peculiar little satisfaction hunts out the corners of my heart. Sunsets and evening shadows find me regretful at tasks undone, but sleep and the dawn and the air of the morning touch me with freshening hopes. Strange things blow in through my window on the wings of the night-wind and I don't worry about my destiny. Charles Sandburg."

After he spent four months at *The Lyceumite* magazine, it was unexpectedly sold to a competitive bureau, and my grandfather lost his job. He was out selling stereographic views for a time again, writing to Professor Wright, "I shall get a map tomorrow and decide where I go. At present only God knows, but tomorrow both God and I will know." After a period of some months, he would again work briefly for a platform magazine, *The Opera House Guide*. published in Chicago; but he would soon lose this job, too, in a shifting of the new magazine's organization.

Throughout the changes of employment, he was writing continuously. There were many poems and he would have two small books published by the Asgard Press during this period. Incidentals came first, in November of 1907, and, shortly afterward, The Plaint of a Rose. Both books were marked by my grandfather's growing concern for the plight of the common working man. In Incidentals, one of the pieces declared: "Man does not live by bread alone. He has a soul. This soul imperiously asks to be fed. It wants art, beauty, harmony. For sweet sounds and forms of beauty and things that caress the eye and thrill the tongue, it asks and demands." In an advertisement written by Wright, Incidentals was described as "a vest-pocket collection of essaylets, thoughts, observations, and reflections by a young man who has seen and felt much. It may be had for 20 cents." And he described The Plaint of a Rose as "a prose-poem; only a few hundred words but each one selected as for a mosaic, it has the poignant, unforgettable quality of the prose-poems of Tourgueneff. It is, as it were, the spirit of the author's philosophy exhaled from the petals of a rose. . . . " It sold for fifty cents.

The years from 1906 to 1908 were also a time when my grandfather was lecturing in earnest. He



Asgard Press also published Sandburg's third book. The Plaint of a Rose, a philosophical prose-poem.

began by speaking at the traveling chautauquas held in huge tents or town halls or churches, and, initially, he spoke with some regularity at the Spencer-Whitman Center. The earlier speeches were often delivered free of charge, later ones occasionally bringing him \$10 or \$25. He memorized these early speeches, and in later years he remembered how he stood before fields of cabbage heads and potatoes, addressing the vegetables and trying to perfect his delivery. He had a tendency to stammer slightly while he was speaking publicly, and there were sometimes silences while he gathered his thoughts into the precise words that he wished to use. It would be years before he would speak freely before an audience with minimal notes or none at all.

His interest in lecturing had begun at Lombard College years before, where he had been held by the delivery of speeches by Elbert Hubbard, Eugene V. Debs, and Samuel Gompers. He had practiced elocution then, and had entered Lombard's Swan Oratorical Contest twice, the first time forgetting his lines in the middle of the speech, then picking them up and carrying on; the second time winning the contest with his talk on "the man, the artist, the seer and prophet, John Ruskin," which he had entitled "A Man With Ideals."

Also at Lombard, he had appeared in a one-act play and had become secretary of the Erosophian Society, where he debated tariffs, imperialism, the Boer War, and whether or not the United States should annex the Philippines. From his college days on, his interest in speaking would grow. Lecturing would serve a dual purpose for him over his lifetime. There were many years when his earnings as a writer would not have sustained a family, and lecturing proved a good way to make money while also satisfying his restless need to travel over the land-scape, to meet and talk with the people, to give voice to his own strong personality.

And so, over the countryside, mostly in small towns, he gave his lectures, managing to fit them in with his sporadic magazine jobs. The first lecture that he gave regularly was on Walt Whitman, "An American Vagabond." In Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in 1907, it was reviewed by *The Daily Tribune:* "... speaking to the largest audience ever gathered for any purpose by any newspaper in this city, Charles Sandburg,



Chicago, held a capacity house enraptured for an hour and a half at the Opera House on Saturday night... drawing an inspiration from the entire life [of Whitman] seldom equalled on the lecture platform in this city. Sandburg proved himself a man of deep thinking ability and great oratorical power...."

Another speech, called "Black Marks," was about the power of the written word. In it was evidence that Abraham Lincoln had caught his imagination long before his biography of the President was ever considered: "In all the art galleries of the world are not many pictures more impressive than that of young Abe Lincoln, his long, lean form stretched out on the floor of a log cabin, by the light of a burning fire, his eager eyes clutching at the black marks recorded on the white pages before him..."

And, more and more, the lectures began to reflect his growing interest in the Socialist movement of the time, and his concern for the wrongs in the society about him. It was a time in America when the big industries were at their peak of uncontrolled power. By 1900 they had developed immense abuses, and the workers' only strength seemed to lie in threats and strikes. There were at that time no antitrust laws and few labor laws. There was no workman's compensation, no minimum wage law, no retirement or vacation pay plans, no health care provisions, no laws protecting those who were most vulnerable. My grandfather worked on one speech that he called "The Three Great Crimes of Civilization," which began: "One of the supreme blunders of modern civilization is that practice ordinarily known as child labor . . . hundreds of thousands of children are at work every day in mines, factories and shops ground down into toil.... they move in a twilight and blunder through their actions with a blind instinct...."

For the next few years, his sympathy for the working man and his indignation with the wrongs he saw would dominate his friendships, his writing, his lecturing, his jobs, his life. By 1908 he would be working as an organizer for the Social-Democratic Party in Wisconsin, lecturing, arranging meetings, encouraging membership in the party. He would travel in Wisconsin with the presidential campaign train of Eugene V. Debs. By 1910 he would be appointed private secretary to Emil Seidel, the Socialist mayor of Milwaukee. For years to come he



Sandburg joined the Social-Democratic Party in Wisconsin in 1907.

Eugene Debs chats in 1924 with the Sandburgs' youngest daughter, Helga. Debs had been a close family friend since 1908, when Sandburg campaigned in Wisconsin for Debs, the Socialist presidential candidate.

CARL SANDBURG

Lecture - recital: readings from his books, "Chicago Poems," "Cornhuskers," "Smoke and Steel."

Bookings of Mr. Sandburg for platform engagements, address:

Mitchell Dawson, First National Bank Bldg., Chicago

Throughout his adult life, even before becoming known as a writer, Sandburg gave many lectures. The lecture circuit seemed to satisfy his wanderlust.

would write intermittently for such publications as Victor Berger's *Political Action* and the Milwaukee *Leader*, the *Sentinel*, and the *Journal*, for the Milwaukee *Social-Democratic Herald* and *LaFollette's Magazine* and *The International Socialist Review*.

My grandfather's early political views were not marked by violence or hatred, and, by today's standards, he would not be considered a radical as much as a prophet. As early as 1901, in The Lombard Review, he had signed the name C.A. Sandburg to an article which defines fairly clearly his own brand of socialism. The article includes these words: "We have our magnate to-day who employs several hundred or several thousand men. If he so wills, these men can be thrown out of employment. To throw these men out of employment would hurt his interest, just as a feudal baron's interests were hurt by beheading vassals. Yet sometimes his self-interest, his business, demands that all work cease. Then the workman are free-free to find work elsewhere or free to economize, free to go in rags, and live on bread and potatoes, and heat but one room in the house, and spend the last of the money that was being saved to buy a home.

"Against magnates, I haven't a word to say. For goodness of heart, for loftiness of purpose, and as regards manhood, they average as well as any class. The bourgeoise and the proletariat both live in glass houses.

"But the present system isn't going to last. It can't last. We're either going back to some kind of an oligarchy, a government of, by and for moneyed men primarily, or we're going forward to a greater democracy, a system under which no man can be thrown out of work and have his plans ruined because of a national financial depression, or because some magnate wishes to manipulate the stock market."

Writing this was the young Sandburg who had seen his father develop a hump on his back from working a ten-hour day six days a week, with never a vacation or sick pay. He had lived with the hoboes of the depression years, many of whom had been forced out of their jobs, forced to leave their families and homes in search of any kind of work. He had seen his father's paycheck cut in half when the railroad had been hit by the "Hard Times" in 1892.

A few years after writing The Lombard Review

article, he again spoke out against the monopolies in a small pamphlet he handed out at his lectures on socialism. The leaflet ends with this definition of his beliefs: "[Socialism] does not mean the passing of private property. Socialism holds that your hat, your house, your books, your piano, your carpets, your toothbrush, shall be your own as your private property. But the great tools of production that are necessary to the life and well-being of all, these should be owned by all. . . . Today men are lucky if they have a chance 'to earn a living.' What the Socialist wants for every man is the chance to live a life."

As times changed, and laws were passed ensuring a decent life for the worker, my grandfather's involvement with the Socialist Party also passed. In fact, during the times of war that were to come—when many Socialists officially took the view of non-involvement—he openly differed with the old leaders he had admired before. Similarly, he differed with them at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution, seeing Russia's fate looming before her and never feeling sympathy toward communism, as did many of his old friends.

He continued, however, to be concerned for those who he felt were oppressed or were the objects of bigotry or viciousness. He was outspoken on the subjects of racism and prejudice until the last days of his life. He was saddened and angered whenever he was confronted with beliefs that existed at the expense of the dignity and freedom of others. As he had propounded in that early pamphlet, what he wanted was for every man to have "the chance to live a life"—and to live it with dignity.

Paula

My grandfather's involvement with the Social-Democratic Party not only gave him a platform for his political and social views and further experience in writing and speaking—it also was responsible for his meeting my grandmother.

He was in Milwaukee for a few days discussing his work with party leaders. He was almost 30 years old and working full time as an organizer for the movement. On December 29, 1907, he first saw my grandmother. In the months ahead he would write to her: "The coincidence of our ideas and whims and

plans is something I would not have belived till—the Wonder Woman came!"

And in the years ahead he would look back on their meeting and write his poem, "The Great Hunt:"

I cannot tell you now;
When the wind's drive and whirl
Blow me along no longer,
And the wind's a whisper at last—
Maybe I'll tell you then—

some other time.

When the rose's flash to the sunset
Reels to the rack and the twist,
And the rose is a red bygone,
When the face I love is going
And the gate to the end shall clang,
And it's no use to beckon or say, "So Long"—
Maybe I'll tell you then—

some other time.

I never knew any more beautiful than you:
I have hunted you under my thoughts,
I have broken down under the wind
And into the roses looking for you.
I shall never find any

greater than you.

Young Lilian Steichen was 24 when they met; she would be 25 on May 1. She was a Latin teacher in Princeton, Illinois, and had been visiting her parents at their farm near Milwaukee over the holidays. Before returning to her teaching job, she went with her mother into Milwaukee to visit family friends and to attend a Socialist meeting. She was a bright, strong-minded girl, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate from the University of Chicago. She sympathized with the goals of the Social-Democratic Party and had done some work for it, translating editorials from German into English and handing out leaflets. Now, before catching her train back to Princeton, she stopped in at party headquarters, and it was there that a good friend of her family introduced her to Charles Sandburg. He was taken with her immediately and asked if he might send her some of his socialist writings. She, not so impressed as he, gave him her address, allowed him to walk her to the streetcar, and said goodby.

They would not see each other again until late March, but in the months that came after their meet-

Lilian Steichen was a young Latin teacher when she first met Sandburg at a Socialist meeting in Milwaukee in December 1907. They married six months later. This photograph was taken by Edward Steichen.



ing there was to be a blizzard of letters. He won her, first, through his writing. Early in the correspondence, she wrote to him, "Dear Mr. Sandburg, The poems—the poems are wonderful! They are different from the poems in the books that stand dusty on my bookshelf—how different! Oh, if I had a volume of your poems, . . . it would not stand on the shelf dusty, but would be read and wrestled with for the life-strength it would give." And, a few weeks later, in response to more material that he sent her, she wrote, "the prose inclosure is splendid, strong, simple, direct, and full of joy and wisdom—it shows the noble strength and stature of your soul. . . ."

From reading his letters, my grandmother seemed to understand, perhaps more clearly than anyone else of this period, the destiny of this man whom she had only met in person once. She wrote to him, "You, Charles Sandburg, as I have known you these weeks... have a past self that contained the embryo of your present self. It was a natural growth and gives sure promise of further beautiful growth...." Her faith in him and his work was already established, and it would never waver over the years.

As for him, he was clearly in love. In his last letter to her before their second meeting, which took place at her parents' farm during her spring vacation, he wrote: "Slept last night looking out on a sky of stars and a winding river. Saw the sun come up the other side of a ridge of hills. So I knew whatever was mine would come to me. . . . Dear, beautiful girl-heart—proud, mystery-woven girl-heart—Lilian Steichen. We see great days of big things—so shall we be like what we see. . . ."

During the week together at her parents' farm, they decided to be married in the coming June. If the months of correspondence had left any doubts in their minds about each other, now, face to face, those doubts vanished. He wrote to her after they parted this time, "... the Soul of You, all that Sea of Singing Thought & Tinted Dream that is in you, all the sky of love and earth of beauty in you, I knew from your letters. . . . In the Great Week, I learned all the rest, found you The Daughter of the Regiment, fresh as all youth, gay as all holidays. . . . that it happened! that you came!" He continued in another letter, "I might use all the superlatives of language and every caress that short Saxon words will carry to



Supplementing the budding writer's income, Lilian "Paula" Sandburg feeds her flock of chickens in 1910.

you. You are the most beautiful, graceful woman in the world, the most splendidly equipped of heart, intellect and feeling in all the world. Yet through and over all this is better and more beautiful and inspiring—some spirit of You, quiet, homely, brooding, steady, unfaltering—always, always mantling me day and night. . . . I am committed to this thing, lost and abandoned with You—the Ideal—the Woman who has lived and knows—the Woman who understands—You."

She replied to him, "Such letters, Heart, such letters! What a man you are! You are the Miracle that I have looked and looked for these years! The Miracle has come to pass . . . lo—the Ideal become Real: You to love. . . . Surely I am blest among women. . . "

They were married on June 15, 1908, in a friend's home in Milwaukee. It was a ringless marriage from which the word "obey" had been omitted. The two declared when they were married that if either one ever wanted a divorce, the other would give it freely. But there would be no use for this declaration as the years passed, for theirs was to be a marriage marked by a rare understanding of one another, and a deep love and respect.

They had renamed each other before the marriage, and, like the vows the new names stuck. Though he had always gone by the name of Charles Sandburg, she called him Carl, feeling that it was a stronger name and suited him better. And she, whose name had been Lilian Anna Maria Elizabeth Magdalene Steichen, he now called "Paula." It grew out of the Luxemburg endearment "Paus'l" by which her family had called her. Over the years, his new name for her would be found in poems again and again. One, printed in *Smoke and Steel*, was entitled "Paula:"

Nothing else in this song—only your face. Nothing else here—only your drinking, night-gray eyes.

The pier runs into the lake straight as a rifle barrel.

I stand on the pier and sing how I know you mornings.

It is not your eyes, your face, I remember.

It is not your dancing, race-horse feet.

It is something else I remember you for on the pier mornings.



Edward Steichen sketches on a bicycle trip in France in 1900. He later gave up painting and became famous as a photographer.

Your hands are sweeter than nut-brown bread when you touch me.

Your shoulder brushes my arm—a south-west wind crosses the pier.

I forget your hands and your shoulders and I say again:

Nothing else in this song—only your face. Nothing else here—only your drinking, night-gray eyes.

The intermingling of values, hopes, and dreams of the young Carl and Paula Sandburg was remarkable. Central to the success of their marriage were, perhaps, two things. First, the two shared a strong belief that the simple things in life were of the most importance. My grandmother had long felt this way. As a child, she had given away to cousins all the jewelry that had been handed down to her by her Luxemburg relatives. She never cared for fine furniture or elegant clothing; never wore a pair of high heeled shoes or makeup of any kind. Her feelings on these matters were consistent—throughout the years when she and her husband had barely enough money on which to live and into the years when they could have afforded luxuries. She had told him of her attitude about "stuff," as she termed it, before their marriage: "I have a way of comparing frescoed ceilings with the sky set with stars—Orion & the rest that always nips in the bud any possible infringement on my part of the tenth commandment 'thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods!' The sky is the big arched ceiling—the only one in the world big enough for us anyway. . . . the sky is the really beautiful ceiling that's ours for the looking, since we have eyes that see.

"With such eyes as we have our only difficulty will be not being able to enter into possession of all the things that *are* really ours—ours for the mere looking. We won't have time enough to walk over all the land we really *own* (because we have power to appreciate it!) we won't have time to walk to the ends of our domain..."

And he had written back to her, as mentioned earlier, "All the big people are simple, as simple as the unexplored wilderness. They love the universal things that are free to everybody...."

And then, secondly to the success of their union, there was their shared belief in the value of work, not for activity's sake, but in the sense of fulfilling one's promise and leaving some mark on the world.



Oldest daughter Margaret looks on as her father holds Janet and her mother holds Helga in this early family portrait.



Three generations gather on the steps in Harbert, Michigan, clockwise from lower left: Janet, Margaret, Mary Kemp "Oma" Steichen, Lilian Steichen Sandburg, and Helga.

My grandfather had written years earlier in *In Reckless Ecstasy*, "Above all other privileges vouch-safed us earthly pilgrims, I place the privilege of work. The brightest, most lasting happiness I know is that which comes from yearning, striving, struggling, fashioning, this way and that, till a thing is done. . . ." And he had recognized, even in the pain of his first love for her, the reality of work for him. He had said in a letter, "We knowing that back of the great love must be great action. . . ."

She replied: "After a while will come a beautiful calm acceptance of the S-S [Sandburg-Steichen], some thing really grander than this present exclamatory ecstasy! . . . We shall do our best *to do something*—to leave some *thing* that we have produced here on earth as a bequest! But we'll remember that the life we live is more important than the works we leave. . . ."

It is questionable if their marriage could have survived—and it did beautifully survive—the years to come had they not shared that strong belief in simplicity of living and in the work that my grandfather produced. In the early years, they lived in rented rooms for long stretches of time, his wages averaging \$20 a week. And there was a long period before his acceptance as a writer when he worked at different daytime jobs and wrote at night, while my grandmother repeatedly typed out his writings, sent them off, and then gathered the rejection slips that arrived. There were firings too. One advertising magazine, misspelling his name as Sandberg, dismissed him with these words: "Observation leads me to believe that you have not the habit of thought nor the method of approach to work which would enable you to develop fully in this organization of ours. It seems to me that your imaginative qualities and abilities lead toward the poetic rather than the selling. . . . consequently. I feel that you ought to get into another line as soon as possible. . . . "

And there were personal tragedies that forced their way into their early years together. Their first child, Margaret, born in 1911, was found to have nocturnal epilepsy during an era when accepted cures ranged from month-long fasts to experimental drugs. Their second child, a girl, died at birth and the third, my Aunt Janet, born in 1916, was struck by a car when she was 16. She lay in a coma for days, then suffered headaches and nervousness over the



"Uncle Ed" Steichen and John Carl, son of Helga, stand tall at the Sandburg home in Harbert, Michigan.

years to come, and never grew to be capable of independence from the home. The fourth child, my mother, Helga, was born in 1918, healthy and normal. Despite Margaret and Janet's problems, the three girls remember their childhood as a sunny time, the family closely knit, devoted, and active.

From the beginning of their marriage, my grandmother devoted herself to her home and her husband. She had written poetry before the marriage, even had a few verses published, and her independent nature had led her to march as a suffragette and to involve herself in political causes. She was far from being demure, but she was a realist. It is not that she demeaned her own abilities; she simply recognized his. Once, during the early years of their marriage, when he was off on a business trip and wrote to her, worried over their lack of funds, she told him, "The Poems are great, Carl. It would be 'all wrong' to give them up. We must give the Poet every chance! If we can only assure ourselves enuff leisure for this-you will arrive. You've got it in you. The only question is can we get enuff time to get it out of you! You are great and great and great! Greater poems than some of yours have absolutely never been written! It's only a question of time till we come to our own. . . . It's all coming, dear—coming sure!"

His admiration for her was vast, and, perhaps because she felt this, she made clear to him, in a letter before their wedding, her feelings about their different roles in the marriage to come. She said, "I am your equal mate, because I can follow you to your heights and depths, as your comrademate, because I can appreciate all you do, tho I cannot do as well myself. . . . I want you to accept me as I am—not to imagine that I am more—perhaps a genius. I know I'm not a genius. . . . You musn't have any illusions about me. See? Else you would be loving some Paula-phantom, not the real Paula—not me. I shall never write for print. . . ."

He replied to her, "What the hell do I care whether you go in for literary work or not? Don't we each give the other free loose for anything & everything? . . . All I know is you are a great woman, a splendid girl. In some way you will express yourself. You decide on the way. . . . Great you are—great, beautiful, inclusive, daring, quick, original. . . . I

would rather be a poem like you than write poems. I would rather embody the big things as you do than carve or paint or write them. You inspire art—& that's living!"

And so it was that, from the day of their wedding, a certain separation of powers developed within their marriage—a separation that gave to both of them a great independence to work and develop in their own spheres without hindrance. They were like the sky and the land, each one basking in the forces of the other, neither one duplicating the other's role.

My grandmother never set herself up as a critic of her husband's work, though she often discussed it with him when he wished to hear her views. She continued to be, over the years, his most staunch supporter. He often read to his family after the evening meal—sometimes his own words, sometimes another's-and it was my grandmother who would linger the longest at the table, after the other family members had drifted away to their own activities. One could hear their voices mixing and mingling as they talked over the writing, or world affairs, or perhaps his lecturing offers and plans. Among the many names they used to address each other, the most common one that they shared together in their later years was "Buddy." As well as his great love, my grandmother was her husband's closest confidante. When he was asked once who were the greatest influences on his life, he replied there were three: Philip Green Wright, his wife Paula, and her brother Edward Steichen.

Paula Sandburg and her brother were the children of Luxemburg immigrants, Mary Kemp and Jean Pierre Steichen. My Uncle Ed, four years older than his sister, had actually been born in Luxemburg before the move to America. They were the children of a strong mother, who, after her husband became ill, supported her family in America by opening her own millinery business in Milwaukee. Her enormous faith in her children and their abilities was not unlike the faith my grandmother later felt for my grandfather and his works. Uncle Ed would strike out on his own at an early age, against his father's wishes and with his mother's blessings. By the age of 25 he would be making a name for himself in the art world; by 35 he would be one of the most creative, respected, and highly paid photographers



Four generations visit at Harbert: Jean Pierre "Opa" Steichen, Lilian, Helga, plus her children, John Carl and Paula, who took Steichen as their surname.

in the world. He and his brother-in-law, Carl Sandburg, became the closest of friends as the years passed, and he was always our family's favorite visitor. In 1929, my grandfather would write *Steichen the Photographer*, claiming that he was "the first biographer of a photographer." Then in 1955, he would write the prologue to Uncle Ed's book of photographs, *The Family of Man*, and in 1959, they would travel together to Russia and Scandinavia with the photographic exhibit of the same name.

Uncle Ed, who was a breeder of delphiniums, named one of his loveliest creations the "Carl Sandburg;" and my grandfather dedicated his book of poems *Smoke and Steel* "To Col. Edward J. Steichen, painter of nocturnes and faces, camera engraver of glints and moments, listener to blue evening winds and new yellow roses, dreamer and finder, rider of great mornings in gardens, valleys, battles."

My grandmother had watched her brother's sudden and sure rise to fame, yet she did not seem discouraged by her husband's much longer fight for recognition; indeed it was, perhaps, a challenge for her. My grandfather had sent her his earnings from the beginning; by the day of their wedding, she had saved \$28 between them. She handled the family's finances throughout the marriage, did all of her own bookkeeping and tax work. And she kept the vegetable gardens and the animals over the years. At one point, early in the marriage, she successfully tried her hand at chicken raising to supplement her husband's small income. She put up quarts of apple butter, peaches and vegetables, and in early letters she assured him, "In the end we'll make it, all right. ... We ask for so little of the things that cost money. ... I have clothes to last awhile. And I can live and thrive on a diet of bread and peanuts and walks and

Early, perhaps because of her husband's long absences while traveling from town to town lecturing, my grandmother turned to the land. Flowers lined the family's walks and lives over the years. There were lilacs and irises, delphiniums and lilies, tall unwieldy dahlias, and simple zinnias and marigolds. Summers, each room in the house held a bouquet and my grandmother went with earth-stained hands from flower bed to flower bed. It was not

fresh air!"

uncommon to see her in her last years coming in the door at Connemara at an early hour with dew on her shoes, having seen to some need of her flowers before having breakfast. My grandfather wrote of her and the flowers in two of his earliest poems:

"Two"
Memory of you is . . . a blue spear of flower.
I cannot remember the name of it.
Alongside a bold dripping poppy is fire and silk.
And they cover you.

"June"
Paula is digging and shaping the loam of a salvia,
Scarlet Chinese talker of summer.
Two petals of crabapple blossom blow fallen in Paula's hair,
And fluff of white from a cottonwood.

My grandmother's tie with the land led her into the raising of animals as well. After my grandfather had written the first two volumes of his Lincoln books, the family moved to Harbert, Michigan, where they lived high on a sand dune in a big house designed by my grandmother. Here, on two hectares (five acres) of sandy land, she began a Tom Thumb farm, with a vegetable garden, with horses for Janet and Helga to ride, with chickens and rabbits to supply meat for the family, and with goats to provide dairy products. Helga had wanted to buy a small cow for the milk production, but the poet in the family had offered a rare suggestion—that they try a goat or two instead, since they were smaller and much easier to handle and transport.

After viewing the numerous horned and smelly prospects, my grandmother and Helga came upon a particularly nice group of six crossbred dairy goats that were for sale. Soon they became interested not only in milk production and cheese making, but also in the breeding of the dairy goats for sale and in taking them to the shows at state fairs. The whole family enjoyed them. The young kids were playful acrobats and the does were gentle and affectionate. Helga and my grandmother began to develop their Chikaming herd of goats, which were named for the Indian tribe of that area, and were soon to be widely known in the goat world for their excellent show type and dependable, high milk production.

In 1945, the family moved to Connemara in Flat

Rock, North Carolina. The move was made partly to escape the cold and the winds of the North and partly to find a home with more land, where the goats could graze on open pasture. At Connemara, the family found a beautiful climate and spectacular hills and views, rich woodland, and rolling meadows for the animals. There was enough space so that the writer in the family could work in peace, far enough from the barn and pastures so that the noise of farm activities would not disturb him.

Connemara was selected by my grandmother and by Helga. My mother had by that time been married, given birth to my brother and me, and been divorced. After the divorce, she had returned to her parents' home, where she worked as secretary to her father and looked after her mother's dairy herd, which was beginning to be run on a regular basis. The family that moved into the new home, then, consisted of seven members: my grandmother and grandfather, their three daughters and Helga's two children, John Carl and me.

In the years immediately after the move, my grandmother and mother developed the goat herd into a large dairy herd, the milk being sold to local dairies and the kids being sold and shipped to all parts of America and even to countries as distant as Brazil and Argentina. At the peak of this venture, the milking herd numbered more than 200 and consisted of three breeds of goats: Toggenburgs, Nubians, and Saanans. Both my mother and grandmother were familiar with all aspects of the operation, but, generally, my grandmother figured out the breeding plans and did most of the desk work, while Helga typed pedigrees, kept the files and managed the actual farm work, with the help of one caretaker who lived with his family in a tenant house near the barn, and with the help of Janet, who saw to the feeding of the young kids.

In the early 1950s, Helga married again and moved out of the state with her children and new husband. From that point on, my grandmother steadily diminished the herd until it was just large enough to provide the family with milk and to enable her to continue her line breeding of the goats. She had studied genetics at the University of Chicago, and now she was concentrating with great interest on the in-breeding of her Toggenburg goats, in hopes of

developing a line of particular excellence. Already well-respected among goat breeders, she now achieved a certain fame for her innovative and intellectual approach to the raising of goats. In 1961, her doe, Puritan Jon's Jennifer II, became the all-breed American champion in milk production and the worldwide Toggenburg champion. The doe, weighing 86 kilograms (170 pounds), produced 2,588 kilograms (5,750 pounds) of milk and 86 kilograms (191 pounds) of butterfat in 305 days. There were people who traveled across the country to visit Mrs. Carl Sandburg and to see her goats, never suspecting that a poet lived at Connemara Farm, too.

My grandfather was proud of her achievements, and for a time he even carried with him on his travels, along with other family photos, a picture of Jennifer II. But he was never involved in the farm operations in any sense; he considered himself an observer. He loved the activity of the farm life surrounding him. Perhaps it stirred memories within him of his days in Galesburg driving the milk wagon, or of his hobo days when he worked as a thresher in the Kansas wheat fields. He relished the simple farm meals we ate, the thick soups, fresh vegetables and fruits, home-raised meats, the goat milk, butter and cheeses. He was always appreciative of what was set before him, praising my grandmother's plain cooking, "No one can make a meal like you, Buddy!" His demands upon his family were few—he needed quiet for work and asked that his papers and books not be disturbed by anyone's zealous cleaning—and he enjoyed their companionship.

Undoubtedly, the hardest aspect of married life for my grandmother was the long absences when her husband was traveling on lecture trips. His travel and his lecturing were a necessary way of providing income for the family over the years and it was something she had had to come to terms with early in the marriage. She had written to him in an early letter, "Missing you is natural. But that I should miss you so, with such aching pain, and tears and tears—that cannot be good. Rest and work and broader interests . . . must save me from that. . . . I send you love and love. I kiss your good, true eyes."

The separations were evidently painful for him, too. During the final months of the time when she was carrying Helga and through the birthing, my



Helga leads goats across the dunes in Michigan.

grandfather was in Scandinavia on a newspaper assignment. Their letters were months in reaching each other. His poem "Home Thoughts" tells of his yearnings:

The sea rocks have a green moss. The pine rocks have red berries. I have memories of you.

....

Speak to me of how you miss me. Tell me the hours go long and slow.

Speak to me of the drag on your heart, The iron drag of the long days.

I know hours empty as a beggar's tin cup on a rainy day, empty as a soldier's sleeve with an arm lost.

Speak to me . . .

But the traveling was something they both grew to accept. Even if it had not been a financial necessity, he might have done it, for wandering was in his blood. The restlessness of his early years had set a pattern, and even in his last years he seemed to hunger periodically for the changing landscape and faces of America.

And so my grandmother would work alone into the nights at her desk in the farm office, and, during the days of her husband's absence, the vacuum cleaner would roar, rugs would come up, floors would be waxed, and we children would go yelling down hallways where doors generally were closed and quiet was preserved.

And then, one day, he would be back, coming through the door, his valise in hand. My grand-mother would hang up his city coat and put his traveling hat on the shelf. His scarf would once again wait by the doorway for rambles over the forest paths and down the long, winding drive. The two would be content, walking together to the dining room, where they would drink coffee, go through the mail of his absence and talk over his travels.

Before their marriage, in a letter postscript, he once wrote to her, "No, I will never get the letter written and finished. It will always need postscripts. I end one and six minutes after have to send more. All my life I must write at this letter—this Letter of



At Connemara, Mrs. Sandburg and her daughters developed their once-small goat herd into a large one with a national reputation as good milk producers and for show qualities. Here she accepts Brocade's third Grand Champion award.

Love for the Great Woman Who Came and Knew and Loved. All my life this must go on!"

The day before my grandfather died, he lay quiet, not speaking. At midnight my grandmother went in to him, to see that all was well before retiring. She touched his hand, and he looked into her face and spoke his single, last word, "Paula."

The arrived writer-poet, captured on film by Dana Steichen, Edward's second wife.

Poet

There are boxes, files, envelopes at Connemara—even coat and shirt pockets—containing the poems of my grandfather. After his death, in the process of the family's move from the farm, I found in the small hallway between his bedroom and workroom a cardboard box that appeared to be filled with the brightly colored magazine photos he so often ripped out and saved. Riffling through them, I saw, sleeping beneath the colors, a sheaf of unpublished poems, some of the loveliest ones he ever wrote.

Occasionally there are differing versions of one of his poems, but not often. My grandfather's poetry was generally written with little revision. The poems were sometimes typed on newsprint paper, but there are many that were handwritten in his round, strong, readable script, and these were often on smaller pieces of paper—on half sheets or on leaves torn from the pocket-sized notebooks that he generally carried with him.

Any of these unpublished poems could be picked up and read by anyone familiar with American poetry and the reader could say with conviction, "The author must be Carl Sandburg." His style was not the product of scholarly pursuit and intention; it was an extension of the man and the man's life, coming more from instinct than design.

In 1950, he wrote in his "Notes for a Preface" in Complete Poems: "Perhaps no wrong is done and no temple of human justice violated in pointing out that each authentic poet makes a style of his own. Sometimes this style is so clearly the poet's own that when he is imitated it is known who is imitated. . . . In the spacious highways of books major or minor, each poet is allowed the stride that will get him where he wants to go if, God help him, he can hit that stride and keep it."

My grandfather hit his stride at an early age, but the hurdles before him were great. The years before



his acceptance as a poet were marked by stacks of rejection letters, and by a need for continual work in areas other than poetry so he could provide the bare necessities of life. There was a great reluctance on the part of readers and critics to accept free verse and the particular subject matter of Sandburg's poetry. Above all, however, the years were marked by his undaunted determination and his personal faith in the value of his work.

My grandfather began writing poetry after he entered Lombard College, where he received so much encouragement from Professor Wright. He was first a writer, and afterwards a poet, for his writing career, as such, had begun with the letters that he wrote home for the Galesburg paper during the Spanish-American War. But it seems that once he began writing poetry, began to feel his own style developing and began to see how well poetry succeeded in expressing his feelings and thoughts, he turned to it instinctively and there was never to be a time in his life after that in which he stopped writing poetry.

His own particular style of writing is evident, if in a paler version, in the earliest letters, poems, and pieces of prose that he wrote. At Lombard he had read the English authors, had admired Keats, Shelley, and Browning. His first poems were often rhymed and marked with traditional rhythms, but in his phrasings, his pauses, his subject matter, there is the clear mark of Carl Sandburg. That mysterious decider, style, was there from the beginning.

What was the popular conception of poetry at the time that my grandfather began writing his own? The poets read by most Americans were those such as James Whitcomb Riley and Ella Wheeler Wilcox. Walt Whitman had been published, of course, but he was not widely accepted or enjoyed. Readers felt at home with a poetry that glorified, idealized, and often softened the hard lines of life. They expected to be carried away from social problems and the mundane routine of their own lives and surroundings.

But young Charles Sandburg had been a different kind of a reader, and he was to become a different kind of writer. Professor Wright wrote of him in those early, formative years, "He reads everything: Boccaccio, Walt Whitman, Emerson, Tolstoi, and enters with appreciation and sympathetic enthusiasm

THE DIAL

A FORTNIGHTLY JOURNAL OF LITERARY CRITICISM, DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION. FOUNDED IN 1860 BY FRANCIS F BROWNE ISSUED EVERY OTHER THURSDAY. \$2 A YEAR, 10 CENTS A COPY

Telephone Harrison 3293 606 SOUTH DEARBORN STREET, CHICAGO

January 31, 1917.

Mr. Carl Sandburg, 616 South 8th Street Maywood, I'l.

Dear Mr. Sandburg

I am very sorry that your review of "Gaudier-Bræceka" is not suitable for TPT DIAV after all the trouble which you and we have taken with it. This is not a review, but a laudatory obtuary. Bræceka was doubtless a most interesting figure in the new Art, but you have devoted yourself to eulogy rather than a critical discussion of his work, and consequently the reader has nothing on which to base your statements or your laudatory estimate.

If you can get into this some critical discussion we shall be glad to use it. for there are many things about it that we like exceedingly, chiefly the freshness and vividness of your phraseology.

Very sincerely yours,

Mariya Jawan
Publisher

Like most writers, Sandburg received some rejections, in this case from "The Dial."

into all that he reads. But literature, even the best, is but a pallid reflection of life; he prefers impressions at first hand. . . . "

My grandfather began to feel that what was most lacking in American literature was a firsthand look at America, the good and the bad, the reality. From his small town upbringing, from his time traveling with hoboes, from his rambles across the countryside while selling stereoscopic "views," and from his days in Chicago, he knew of the frustrations, the disappointments, and the futility that too often plagued the lives of the poor working man. It was a subject largely ignored by poets. And so now he wrote poems like "Mill-Doors," and like "Mag:"

I wish you never quit your job and came along with me.
I wish we never bought a license and a white dress
For you to get married in the day we ran off to a minister
And told him we would love each other and take care of
each other
Always and always long as the sun and the rain lasts
anywhere.
Yes, I'm wishing now you lived somewhere away from here
And I was a bum on the bumpers a thousand miles away

dead broke.

I wish the kids had never come And rent and coal and clothes to pay for And a grocery man calling for cash, Every day cash for beans and prunes. I wish to God I never saw you, Mag. I wish to God the kids had never come.

I wish to God I never saw you, Mag.

His poetry often voiced his indignation over the wrongs that he saw at home, and also his sorrow over the young lives lost through war abroad. It became a mark of his poetry, however, that there was little brutality or vindictiveness in it. There were occasional passages that spoke of violence, but the violence was in the scene being portrayed, not in the stance of the poet. Indeed, some of his strongest poems achieve their strength through understatement, as he quietly draws the picture and leaves the reader to come to his own conclusions. Among the many examples of this is "Buttons," written during World War I:

I have been watching the war map slammed up for advertising in front of the newspaper office.

Buttons—red and yellow buttons—blue and black buttons—are shoved back and forth across the map.

A laughing young man, sunny with freckles, Climbs a ladder, yells a joke to somebody in the crowd, And then fixes a yellow button one inch west And follows the yellow button with a black button one inch west

(Ten thousand men and boys twist on their bodies in a red soak along a river edge,
Gasping of wounds, calling for water, some rattling death in their throats.)

Who would guess what it would cost to move two buttons one-inch on the war map here in front of the newspaper office where the freckle-faced young man is laughing to us?

And there are these lines from "The Windy City:"

Forgive us . . . If cripples sit on their stumps And joke with the newsies bawling, 'Many lives lost! many lives lost!— Ter-ri-ble ac-ci-dent! many lives lost!'— If again twelve men let a woman go, 'He done me wrong; I shot him'-Or the blood of a child's head Spatters on the hub of a motor truck— Or a 44-gat cracks and lets the skylights Into one more bank messenger— Or if boys steal coal in a railroad yard And run with humped gunnysacks While a bull picks off one of the kids And the kid wriggles with an ear in cinders And a mother comes to carry home A bundle, a limp bundle, To have his face washed, for the last time, Forgive us if it happens—and happens again— And happens again. Forgive the jazz timebeat of clumsy mass shadows. footsteps of the jungle, the fang cry, the rip claw hiss,

of clumsy mass shadows,
footsteps of the jungle,
the fang cry, the rip claw hiss,
the slant of the slit eyes waiting.
Forgive us if we work so hard
And the muscles bunch clumsy on us
And we never know why we work so hard—
If the big houses with little families
And the little houses with big families
Sneer at each other's bars of misunderstanding:
Pity us when we shackle and kill each other
And believe at first we understand
And later say we wonder why.

Of course his poetry is not limited to a portrayal of the harshness of life. A great many of the poems, in fact, are concerned with the simple beauties and joys of life. He writes of love, of children, of cities and prairies, of memories and moons. His tone is often tender and lyrical, his words easily understood, brief, but lingering. The early poem "Lost" goes:

Desolate and lone
All night long on the lake
Where fog trails and mist creeps,
The whistle of a boat
Calls and cries unendingly,
Like some lost child
In tears and trouble
Hunting the harbor's breast
And the harbor's eyes.

This poet, too often only remembered in anthologies for his lusty, brawling lines about "Chicago, Hog Butcher for the World," also wrote poems that were almost hymns to the countryside. His love of the land sweeps through his volumes of poetry, his tie to it evident in poems like "Prairie," which begins:

I was born on the prairie and the milk of its wheat, the red of its clover, the eyes of its women, gave me a song and a slogan.

Here the water went down, the icebergs slid with gravel, the gaps and the valleys hissed, and the black loam came, and the yellow sandy loam.

Here between the sheds of the Rocky Mountains and the Appalachians, here now a morning star fixes a fire sign over the timber claims and cow pastures, the corn belt, the cotton belt, the cattle ranches.

Here the gray geese go five hundred miles and back with a wind under their wings honking the cry for a new home.

Here I know I will hanker after nothing so much as one more sunrise or a sky moon of fire doubled to a river moon of water.

The prairie sings to me in the forenoon and I know in the night I rest easy in the prairie arms, on the prairie heart.

One of the surest trademarks of my grandfather's style was the language that he used. He once said to his friend, Harry Hansen, "Out on the prairies where



Sandburg reads to a group visiting Connemara. On the steps with him and Mrs. Sandburg is writer Harry Golden, front left.

the wind blows men say there is no let-up to the wind. The ordinary newspaper writer however would feel compelled to say in his copy that there is no cessation to the wind. . . . " And so, in his own work, he turned often to the jargon, the lingo, the words of the people about which he wrote. His most poetic images and phrasing would not seem alien to a store clerk or a steelworker. He became known, perhaps more than any of those young, revolutionary poets who were writing in the early part of the century, for the particular Americanism of his poetry. It is impossible to imagine him leaving the country and living in Paris or London for several years, as was the vogue among so many authors of his time. He felt no need to leave; everything he needed to write about was here at home—the sweating racehorse, Alix; the ball handler, Ty Cobb; the Hungarian immigrants on the river bank with their keg of beer and accordion; the Jewish fish crier on Maxwell Street; the small town girl, Chick Lorimer, hunting her dreams down, gone.

When his second volume of poetry, *Cornhuskers*, came out in 1918, the critic, William Allen White, wrote to him, "Of all of today's modern poets, it seems to me that you have put more of America in your verses than any other...."

But the reception of Carl Sandburg's poetry was not always so eager, nor so gracious. There were critics who wondered if it really was poetry, both the form and the content were so unfamiliar when it first came out in print. And early in his career as a poet, his sympathy for the working class was often attacked. Amy Lowell, who became a good friend and a great admirer of my grandfather's poetry at once, still said, when his first book came out, "Prejudice is a firmly-rooted thing, and, try as he will, Mr. Sandburg cannot help feeling that virtue resides with the people who earn their daily bread with their hands rather than those who do so with their brains. . . ."

If he had been easily discouraged, my grandfather might indeed have stopped writing poetry in those early years. When his first group of poems was published in Harriet Monroe's Chicago-based magazine, *Poetry*, in March of 1914, the magazine's foreign correspondent, Ezra Pound, wrote to Carl Sandburg from Italy, "I don't think you've got your 'form' yet, in the athletic sense. . . . certain phrasings



The author autographs a Lincoln volume at a bookstore.

leave me in doubt. I am not sure whether your 'Chicago' wouldn't hit harder if it began six lines later and ended five lines sooner, for example. . . . "

It was through that influential little magazine, *Poetry*, that my grandfather first gained national recognition. The editors published several groups of his poems and in late summer of 1914 awarded him their Helen Haire Levinson Prize of \$200 which was to go to "the best poem contributed by a citizen of the United States and published in *Poetry*. . . ." The editors were unusually enthusiastic about Carl Sandburg. They introduced him to other coming poets of that era, and also to Alfred Harcourt, who would eventually found his own publishing company and publish all but two of my grandfather's books over the coming years.

Sandburg's first two books of poems were published by Henry Holt & Company, where Harcourt was his editor. The first volume, *Chicago Poems*, came out in 1916 and was dedicated "To My Wife and Pal, Lilian Steichen Sandburg." Amy Lowell wrote to him, "I am perfectly delighted with your book. I do not know when I have read anything that gives me so much pleasure." And Theodore Dreiser said that his poems were "beautiful. . . . Do I need to congratulate you? Let me envy you instead. I would I could do things as lovely. . . ." Vachel Lindsay wrote to Harriet Monroe a sentiment which was becoming more and more widespread: "I don't in the least approve of free verse—but I cannot help but approve of Sandburg. . . ."

Gradually, free verse was becoming acceptable and my grandfather's lecturing tours, which continued throughout the years, were doing a great deal to gain the public's understanding of the relatively new form of poetry. It was said in the 1920s that if you still didn't like free verse, you would, once you heard Sandburg. He was considered the master interpreter of his own poetry. His deep, rich voice became familiar to many, and through his readings many former non-believers in free verse began to discover and enjoy the new rhythm and subject matter of his poems.

There continued to be discussions, of course, in classrooms and literary circles, as to exactly what *did* constitute poetry. Some critics never have accepted all of Carl Sandburg's verses as true poetry. It has

Foq

The for comes on little cat feet, It outs looking over city and harbor on eilent hannches and then moves on.

Parl San Hours

Sandburg sometimes wrote out a copy of his famous "Fog" poem for friends and acquaintances.

been said that some of his longer poems more closely resemble prose, and, conversely, that his prose is sometimes as lyrical and rhythmical as a poem. Poetry has been ruthlessly analyzed and classified over the years, and my grandfather's poems are no exception. Even his good friend, Harriet Monroe of *Poetry*, wrote of his verses at one time, "The rhythm of most English lyrics is an overlay, more or less adroit, of large cadences upon the iambic metrical pattern. . . . What Sandburg does is . . . an underlying three-four or four-time beat in each poem, his preference leaning, oftener than with most poets, to four-time, which admits that generous use of spondees in 'The Great Hunt' which begins in a creeping four-time, he tries with magical effect the old but rarely used trick of changing the beat to three-time for the final stanza. . . . "

She knew enough of her friend to continue, "It makes no difference whether the art is conscious or instinctive. With Sandburg it is probably instinctive; he may not know a spondee from a kilowatt, but he has a marvelously sensitive ear. . . . None of the scholarly imagists, or other free-versifiers of the present period, has so greatly widened the rhythmic range of English poetry; and the prosodists of the future will have to study him in order to make new rules to enslave poets yet to come."

Carl Sandburg, himself, was little concerned with all of the dialogue. In his "Notes for a Preface" in *Complete Poems*, he states simply, "A poet explains for us what for him is poetry by what he presents to us in his poems." And once, when faced with a scholar who was relentless in his search for symbols and underlying meanings, Sandburg quipped, "When I wrote that poem, only God and I knew what it meant, and now only God knows." On the same subject, he said at another time, "If a poem is a great big poem it will mean half a dozen things to half a dozen people; each one will get something personal out of it."

He wrote his poems partly out of the mood of the moment, and was not particular about his location or his writing implements. His poems were written on street cars, at his newspaper desk, in trains and depots, in his own home study, or in the solitude and peace of the outdoors. But, though he often responded to his moods in writing, he was not indulgent in his

work habits. He would advise young authors to write when the mood was there and when it wasn't, and he would sometimes quote Paganini, who said that success was the product of "toil, solitude, and prayer."

I can still see my grandfather bending to his work, sometimes under the sun, outdoors, shirt opened, his body browned and sweating; sometimes amid the clutter of his study, two fingers rapidly pecking out the letters on the typewriter. He often wrote long into the nights, the light burning from his window when other members of the family were rising at the traditional early farm hour. There was a vigor about him, even when he was sitting at his desk, quiet. The age-old image of the poet as a sedentary, pale, and perhaps effeminate figure never fitted Carl Sandburg.

It is difficult, maybe futile, to attempt to-define poetry. As my grandfather once wrote, "What is this borderland of dream and logic, of fantasy and reason, where the roots and tentacles of mind and personality float and drift into the sudden shaping of a flash resulting in a scheme, a form, a design, an invention, a machine, an image, a song, a symphony, a drama, a poem? There are those who believe they know—and those who hope they may yet know." It is perhaps equally difficult and futile to try to define a poet. In Carl Sandburg's case, the man and his poetry stand as one. You meet the man when you meet his work. My grandmother said to me on the day that my grandfather died, as she held one of his volumes of poetry softly in her hands, "Well, at least I still have Carl between these pages."

Newspaperman

My grandfather's hands were browned and broad, strong hands from peasant stock. He would sometimes sit on the lawn with my brother and me, place an opened penknife on the back of his hand, then flip it through the air; one, two, three flips it would make before landing, point down, in the grassy land.

And we were amazed, too, at his trick of throwing an open knife skillfully through his fingers, outspread on the lawn. The knife would shoot into the soil and quaver there. We children watched, large-eyed and laughing.

He had a great collection of these knives—some heavy and fashioned for skinning, some so delicate

and fine one could hardly conceive of a use for them. He had bought one here and there over the years, in a pawnshop or a local store, but most had been given to him by friends who were struck by his continual use of the knives.

Most people saw him using the knives in one of two ways. My grandmother always kept a supply of Wheeling stogies in the house, and he would reach for one, take a penknife and carve the cigar carefully into halves, then light one of the stubs. He smoked the half-cigars while he worked, or, more often, held between his teeth a stub whose fire had long since gone out.

And bent over a newspaper at Connemara—at the dining room table, or at his work desk, or on the front porch, or on the long rock in back of the house—he would reach into his pants pocket, bring out a knife, open it, and cut an article out of the paper. I can still see the hand putting just the right amount of pressure on the knife, so that only one layer of paper would be cut. And the knife would cut neatly; the paper edge would be slightly wavy and unlike one cut by scissors. These clippings cut in this way and then filed away in coat pockets, shirt pockets, and eventually boxes—were a hallmark of my grandfather. He used to say to my mother, using his nickname for her, "Stick with me, Swipes, and you'll be an heir to millions, millions of clippings!"

This cutting of articles from newspapers was a habit that is hard to date. He was a reader of newspapers even as a child, saying that they were more exciting than any mystery book and that they were the best buy for a dime that you could get. After he and my grandmother were married, it was standard procedure for her to sew deep, extra pockets on the insides of his coats to hold his clippings and notebooks.

Over the years, it became a familiar gesture for him to hand friends a newspaper clipping, saying to them on parting, "Here, read this and let me know what you think." He even mailed clippings, articles and pieces of whimsy to my brother and me and we delighted in their arrival, for the content was always unpredictable and always interesting.

Carl Sandburg was a born observer of the human condition. This was part of what made him a poet,

and part of what made him a newspaperman. His fellow worker on *The Daily News*, Harry Hansen, said of him, "No man has a keener sense for the significant phrase in homely surroundings than Carl Sandburg. He is always pulling something out of the air almost—something you want to remember, to reflect on, and then telling you that it came from the clerk at your elbow, the elevator man, the woman with the dust-mop. He has a faculty for alighting on stray, nomadic items in newspapers and magazines that hold his attention. . . ."

As a newspaperman, my grandfather was self-styled, fitting no mold. His involvement in the field developed gradually out of his interest in the small and large happenings in the world around him. He began in this profession in his early 20s, during the Spanish-American War, when he wrote letters home to be published in the local Galesburg *Daily Mail*. Then in college, he wrote for and edited the school newspaper and yearbook.

Later, especially after his marriage in 1908, when steady employment became particularly important, he worked for a series of magazines and newspapers, writing, variously, news items, columns and editorials. One of the earlier papers was *The Day Book*, a tabloid newspaper in Chicago, run by N.D. Cochran, a man with a strong sense of social justice. And before joining the big Chicago *Daily News*, he also worked on, in Milwaukee: the *Journal, Leader, Daily News* and *Sentinel*; and in Chicago: the *Evening World, System Magazine*, and even the unlikely *American Artisan and Hardware Record*. He wrote under pseudonyms occasionally, among these, Sidney Arnold and W.C. Colson.

Almost all of his writings during these years bear the distinct mark of Carl Sandburg. The material was usually related to social problems, labor disputes, and worker's rights. During the years that he was earning a living as a newspaperman, he was also, of course, writing poetry and seeing these poems come into print. He was sometimes asked if the world of poetry and world of news reporting were not too far distant from one another. He replied in a letter to one friend, "You might say at first shot that this is a hell of a place for a poet, but the truth is it is a good place for a poet to get his head knocked in when he needs it..."

Sandburg, second from left, works on an article for The Day Book, a Chicago daily newspaper that did not contain advertising.



In a sense, the newspaper work acted as a research laboratory for some of his poems. There are those that clearly grew out of the things that he saw and heard as a reporter. His poem, "The Right to Grief," stemmed directly from an assignment on the *Daily News* that sent him into the district back of the Chicago stockyards. There he learned that seven times as many children died in the stockyards district as in nearby Hyde Park. He came back to the office and wrote:

Take your fill of intimate remorse, perfumed sorrow,
Over the dead child of a millionaire,
And the pity of Death refusing any check on the bank
Which the millionaire might order his secretary to scratch off
And get cashed.

Very well, You for your grief and I for mine. Let me have a sorrow my own if I want to.

I shall cry over the dead child of a stockyards hunky. His job is sweeping blood off the floor. He gets a dollar seventy cents a day when he works And it's many tubs of blood he shoves out with a broom day by day.

Now his three year old daughter
Is in a white coffin that cost him a week's wages.
Every Saturday night he will pay the undertaker fifty cents till
the debt is wiped out.

The hunky and his wife and the kids
Cry over the pinched face almost at peace in the white box.
They remember it was scrawny and ran up high doctor bills.
They are glad it is gone for the rest of the family now
will have more to eat and wear.

Yet before the majesty of Death they cry around the coffin And wipe their eyes with red bandanas and sob when the priest says, "God have mercy on us all."

I have a right to feel my throat choke about this. You take your grief and I mine—see?

Tomorrow there is no funeral and the hunky goes back to his job sweeping blood off the floor at a dollar seventy cents a day.

All he does all day long is keep on shoving hog blood ahead of him with a broom.

My grandfather began to work regularly for the Daily News in 1917 after meeting Henry Justin

Smith, the news editor. His association with the *News* continued, in one form or another, into the 1940s. His former experience in labor matters and with social problems made him the natural choice to cover strikes, lockouts, and boycotts, and for three years he attended conventions of the American Federation of Labor. And when the local race riots broke out in the summer of 1918, after the killing of a black boy by a white man at a park swimming beach, Carl Sandburg was assigned to report the incident. His series of articles on the matter was later published by Harcourt Brace as *The Chicago Race Riots*.

In October of 1918, my grandfather left the *Daily News* for three months, traveling to Stockholm for the Newspaper Enterprise Association as their correspondent in Eastern Europe. Stockholm, being near Germany, Russia, and Finland, was considered the ideal base for Sandburg and it was hoped that he would get the inside story on the "Red and White Terrors," the Bolsheviks and the Anti-Bolsheviks. He did almost too thorough a job, coming under fire on return from the customs officials who accused him of having too close a contact with what they termed "unfriendly forces."

After returning to America and separating from the N.E.A., he went back to work at the *Daily News*. They were well tuned to each other. There were no editorial shackles placed on him, and he was free to travel or take off time for his personal writing when necessary. His work as a reporter in the 1920s was described by Harry Hansen: "Carl Sandburg was never a hair-trigger reporter; he could never get into action quickly and weave a fanciful story as Ben Hecht, seated only at the adjoining desk, was wont to do; his work required meditation and leisure, and often he toiled far into the night and Henry Smith would find his neatly typewritten manuscript on his desk when he arrived early the next morning."

Unlikely as it may sound, my grandfather later took the job as the *Daily News*' motion picture critic when it was offered to him, and he seemed to like it. His reviews were in a totally new style, baffling theater managers who looked for easy quotes that they could use in publicity. Some of these same managers even approached the *Daily News* advertising department, promising more advertising lineage if

they could be assured a more dependable movie critic; but to no avail. Carl Sandburg continued in his own style and his own way, studying the faces of the moviegoers, wondering over their dreams and their lives. His experiences and thoughts are reflected in the lines of some of his poems, where he speaks of working girls lined up at the movie houses, nickels in their pockets.

His work on the newspapers and the natural bent of the reporter in him was always evident in Carl Sandburg's other pursuits. It is certainly clear in his relentless searching for the facts in his six-volume Lincoln biography and in his collection of folk songs—The American Songbag. And his detailing of and fascination with the lives and problems and dreams of the people is clearly there in his poems. In his writing there is so often the homely philosophy made poetic, the small clue to the mystery of man singled out and put down into free verse. To many that is the kernel of Carl Sandburg's works—that the most simple and sometimes subtle things could offer such fascination.

In his last years at the *Daily News* his work was in the form of a column, which the syndicate department of the paper advertised as written by "The Man to Whom No Fact Is Uninteresting." The column was entitled "From the Notebook of Carl Sandburg," and it covered everything from observations of the Tunney-Dempsey fight to comments on the Chicago health commissioner's six rules for good health.

There was something of the newspaperman in my grandfather to the end of his life. He continued his friendship with old newspaper cronies over the years, and he always had a weakness for young reporters who would call, asking for an interview with him at Connemara. His loft-like office looked somewhat like a reporter's corner. One could find him there chewing on a cigar butt and pecking away in newspaper fashion with two fingers on his old typewriter. The orange crates in which he stored his papers and clippings, the stacks of newspapers and magazines, the stub pencils in tin cans, and the orderly disarray of the office—all hinted of the years in smoke-filled newsrooms.

And, of course, downstairs at the dining table, waiting beside his plate each day, would be the stack of papers that he subscribed to from about the

SANDBURG

HOW TO READ THE UNIVERSAL CLASSIC—YOUR DAILY NEWSPAPER

By CARL SANDBURG

By CARL SANDBURG

The newspaper goes everywhere. Lee ram it fall on the jet and the unjust. Like history it begins and ends anywhere and leaves much to the expected. The more terible in the scalings which is a substantial to the expected. The more terible in the scalings which is a substantial to the control of the properties and ends and colleges there should be class discussions of the young might beam there are many different ways.

How to read the classics of literature has how been taught in the schools and universities. How to know good books from had, however the properties help, of this there has been much teaching. But the great universal classic fit to common people's reading of the common peop

In 1942 Sandburg wrote a weekly column for the Chicago Times syndicate. This column, about how to read a daily newspaper, was carried in his hometown by The Galesburg Post.

country. He read them regularly, as he kept up with columnists, editorial opinions, and world news. And then there would be my grandfather after dinner, drinking his coffee with honey and goat milk in it, chatting with my grandmother, and opening the papers—slowly unfurling them, penknife in hand.

Teller of Tales

Coming home from the N.E.A. assignment after World War I, my grandfather wrote to a friend, "The kids at home are a tantalization of loveliness. And the Missus takes life all the time with finer zests. We walked eight miles in fierce winter weather last Sunday. The kids are a loan, only a loan, out of nowhere, back to nowhere, babbling, wild-flying—they die every day like flowers shedding petals—and come on again. . . . I'm writing you my Peer Gynt heart today. . . . Today I feel I won't put out another book of poetry in forty years. Anyhow before another of poetry I'm going to do a Kid book."

And so, in the months to come, when he would meet with an old friend, he might take out of his inside coat pocket a tale from his "kid book" and read some of it. And there was wonderment at first that Carl Sandburg was writing children's stories; then came delight, for the stories were the fairy tales of America, and pure Sandburg.

After receiving the first volume of the *Rootabaga Stories*, published in 1922, Amy Lowell wrote to my grandfather, "I thank you a thousand times for them. . . . I think they are poems on the whole—clearly not fiction, they are too much like fact. . . ." And Frank Lloyd Wright said, "Dear Carl—I read your fairy-tales nearly every night—before I go to bed—they fill a long felt want—Poetry. I'll soon know them all by heart. . . ."

Whether they were poetry or fiction or fact, they were certainly a new kind of fairy tale. There were no kings, or knights in shining armor or enchanted princesses in these stories; instead, there were skyscrapers, railroads, prairies, a man who wears a popcorn hat, popcorn mittens, and popcorn shoes. The stories were filled with the familiar used in unfamiliar ways. There is the "Wedding Procession of the Rag Doll and the Broom Handle," made up of the Spoon Lickers licking big table spoons of butterscotch, gravy and marshmallow fudge; and the

Tin Pan Bangers; and the Chocolate Chins, all eating chocolate; and the Dirty Bibs; and the Clean Ears; and the Easy Ticklers; and the Musical Soup Eaters. And there are "silver blue lakes like blue porcelain breakfast plates." And there are corn fairies, helping the corn to grow, wearing overalls of "corn gold cloth, woven from leaves of ripe corn mixed with ripe October corn silk." And the author uses new, tempting words, too—"slimpsing," "spanch," "whincher."

Unlike many of the European fairy tales, the Rootabaga stories have little in them that is frightening to children, but many run parallel to the sadder realities of life: war, death, loss. He tells of the Potato Face Blind Man who wears a sign "I Am Blind *Too*." And when a friend asks why this is so, he explains that some of the people that pass by "have eyes—but they see nothing with their eyes. They look where they are going and they get where they wish to get, but they forget why they came and they do not know how to come away..."

And there is the tragic tale of "The Two Skyscrapers Who Decided to Have a Child." In the night they leaned close to one another, saying, "It must not be a child standing still all its life on a street corner. Yes, if we have a child she must be free to run across the prairie, to the mountains, to the sea. . . ." And when their child came, "it was a railroad train, the Golden Spike Limited, the fastest long distance train in the Rootabaga Country." And the people spoke of their child as "a strong, lovely child." Then came the day when the newsies on the street corner came yelling, "All about the great train wreck! All about the Golden Spike Limited! Many lives lost! Many lives lost!"

My grandfather had said to a friend when he first began writing the stories, "These are my refuge from the imbecility of a frightened world. . . ." What he had seen abroad of the war on the N.E.A. assignment had affected him deeply. Some of the Rootabaga stories perhaps speak more strongly than others of his feelings and his reasons for turning to this land of fantasy. In the second and last book of Rootabaga tales, called *Rootabaga Pigeons* and published in the next year, 1923, there is a story titled "How Two Sweetheart Dippies Sat in the Moonlight on a Lumber Yard Fence and Heard About the Sooners and the Boomers." In it my grandfather tells of a tranquil

The author of the Rootabaga Stories reads to his grandchildren, Paula and John Carl. They called him Buppong.



land in words that have the rhythm and roll of poetry:

"Far away where the sky drops down, and the sunsets open doors for the nights to come through—where the running winds meet, change faces and come back—there is a prairie where the green grass grows all around.

"And on that prairie the gophers, the black and brown-striped ground squirrels, sit with their backs straight up, sitting on their soft paddy tails, sitting in the spring song murmur of the south wind, saying to each other, 'This is the prairie and the prairie belongs to us.'

Into this land come the sooners and the boomers, and at first they get along, trading eggs, molasses, broom corn. But, in time, there come arguments between the sooners and boomers; great, important arguments that end in wars: "Then came the war to decide whether peach pickers must pick peaches on Tuesday mornings or on Saturday afternoons. Tuesday mornings won. This was a short war. Then came a long war—to decide whether telegraph pole climbers must eat onions at noon with spoons, or whether dishwashers must keep their money in pig's ears with padlocks pinched on with pincers. So the wars went on. . . . " And soon there were no eggs, molasses, broom corn and "the sooners and boomers all got lost in the war. . . . " And the prairie returned to the gophers.

Not all the stories, by far, are moralistic in tone. There are simple, gay tales of friends and lovers, and there are some that are pure flights of imagination. What they all do have in common is the mark of Carl Sandburg's taletelling: a love of the whimsical and of words.

How did my grandfather's storytelling begin? It had started with his own children, whom he had nicknamed Spink, Skabootch and Swipes. Before the *Rootabaga Stories* had become a reality, he was telling his daughters "blue fox stories"—tales about a silver-blue creature who lived beneath the front porch of the family's Elmhurst, Illinois, home. The fox would come into the house through a kitchen window to drink cream from a saucer, measuring himself between sips to be sure he could get out again. Carl Sandburg's daughters would run to him and beg, "Tell me a fox. Tell me a fox." And, so, he began

to invent more tales, and the *Rootabaga Stories* came to life.

My grandfather, always strongly tied to his family, was perhaps brought even closer to children through the problems that arose with Margaret's illness and, later, Janet's accident. When Margaret was found to have the first indications of nocturnal epilepsy in November of 1921, she and my grandmother went at once to a Battle Creek, Michigan, sanitarium where the doctors hoped that a strict control of diet would cure or control the disease. Ten-year-old Margaret was put on a fast there; she was weak and her weight plummeted, but she remained optimistic and cooperative. She had with her the steady support of her mother, and the tenderness of her father's letters. "Dear Margaret, This is only a little letter from your daddy to say he thinks about you hours and hours and he knows that there was never a princess or a fairy worth so much love. We are starting on a long journey and hard fight—you and mother and daddy and we are going to go on slowly, quietly, hand in hand, the three of us, never giving up. And so we are going to win. Slowly, quietly, never giving up, we are going to win. Daddy."

It was a time of worry and sadness, yet a time to take life as it came. My grandfather, at home with Janet and Helga, wrote to Battle Creek regularly. In one letter he said to his wife, "Out of the window, I can see the wild ruddy face of Helga with its wonderful curves. She is at the sand box. For hours those kids have been talking and laughing out there. I am only living in the present with them, which is what I am going to do with Margaret. The worst is to come and if it doesn't come what we get is so much velvet." Luckily, the velvet came. While Margaret was still relatively young, drugs were discovered that could control, to a greater and greater extent, the seizures.

Later, when Janet suffered her accident and lay in a coma for days, her father showed a similar concern for her. And the concern was not just of the moment, but lasted into the years—for both of these girls who were rendered dependent upon their parents by their physical problems. As for my mother, Helga, during the Michigan years at Harbert, my grandfather once wrote a friend that, "The eldest daughter is an invalid, the second is still below normal from being



struck and run over by a careless motorist, the youngest is as good as God ever bestowed on a house; she is as nice as anything in a Russian ballet when she rides her horse out into Lake Michigan for a swim together..."

My mother has written at length of her childhood, in Elmhurst, Illinois, and then in Harbert, Michigan. She recalls going with a glass of milk to her father where he was typing in the weed-filled lot next to their Elmhurst home, his sun-warmed skin bare from the waist up, and brown. She recalls him walking her upside down on the ceilings of her youth; and his voice telling her of the blue fox with white stripes, who says, "I am in the first grade of the Blue Foxes. And in the first grade we all wear stripes."

In Harbert she recalls the glowing sands beside the Great Lake, and the family animals, and the fragrant spaghetti sauce and hot cobblers around which the family gathered in the evenings. She remembers her childhood as a time of independence and security. Strangers sometimes worried that the three Sandburg daughters were living too isolated an existence; but the daughters would ask, if a friend invited them to Chicago for the day, "Mother, do we have to go?"

My mother's father was a powerful presence in their home, but a gentle one, asking only, as she puts it, for "quiet, food, sleep, companionship." The girls were not spanked or treated rudely. But my mother does recall that once or twice she was discovered with a favorite book of hers from the *Bongo*, *The Jungle Boy* series of the day, which she usually hid from him, in a copy of *Plutarch's Lives* or H.G. Wells' *A Short History of The World*. He would discover the book, snatch it, and hurl it across the room, shouting about "tripe" and hoping that she would get the point.

My grandfather somehow never fit the image that many people seem to have of poets or geniuses. While he would have a normal fit of anger and stamp on the floor when noises from the house below disturbed him at a difficult time in his writing, it was never directed against the persons, but against the distraction and the family did not resent it. He was not one to let any distance build up between him and other members of the family, and if there were harsh words spoken—which happened infrequently—he would always make a point of apologizing later.

Sandburg traveled about the country giving lectures and reading his poetry. He often closed the sessions with a few songs on his guitar.

He delighted in the flexibility of children's minds, in the whimsy and seriousness of their ways. He felt a natural kinship with them, and there were few children who did not respond to him almost immediately. They were an important part of living to him and a part of his writing, too. He once said of them in his poem "People With Proud Chins:"

I tell them where the wind comes from, Where the music goes when the fiddle is in the box.

Kids—I saw one with a proud chin, a sleepyhead, And the moonline creeping white on her pillow. I have seen their heads in the starlight And their proud chins marching in a mist of stars.

They are the only people I never lie to.

I give them honest answers,

Answers shrewd as the circles of white on brown chestnuts.

Biographer of Lincoln

In the living room at Connemara, a glass and walnut case stands in an eastern corner, behind the piano. On top of it, leaning against the wall, is a framed letter. The intricate design of its writing is a pleasure to see. It reads: "Will Mr. Rodney do Th. Jefferson the favor to take family soup with him tomorrow? Jan 24,'69." In our childhood, my brother and I used to go to the glass and wood case occasionally and finger through the ribboned medals and awards within, not understanding them, but intrigued with their weight and bright colors and the varying boxes of velvet or cardboard within which they rested. They were mixed there among skipping stones from Lake Michigan and among small oddities that people had given to the family—tiny carvings of animals; sugar cubes decorated with log cabins, axes, and stovepipe hats; the clean, white skull of a very small creature; heavy, ribbed, uneven bullets from the battlefields of the Civil War. There, too, in the case, were rolled documents, which we hardly ever bothered to open. Among them were honorary doctorates from Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Wesleyan, New York, and Syracuse universities, Lafayette and Knox colleges and Uppsala University in Sweden. And somewhere in the confusion of stones and boxes. small carvings and papers, lay two Pulitzer Prizes. The second was for his Complete Poems, but the earlier one was for history, and was given to my



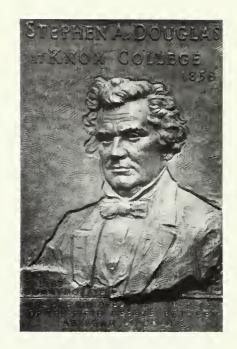
Bronze tablets at Knox College in Galesburg commemorate the fifth debate between Abraham Lincoln...

grandfather in 1940 after the publication of his Abraham Lincoln: The War Years.

It had come as a surprise to many people who had not known my grandfather well, who had only known him as a poet or as a newspaperman or as a writer of children's stories, when his first two volumes of Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years came out in 1926. There were some critics who said at the time that a poet's pen should not meddle in history, that it would tend to be too emotional, could not view events and people objectively enough. But the more general opinion was that Sandburg was particularly well adapted to writing the story of Lincoln. Across the nation, critics echoed what William Allen White wrote in the New York World: "Carl Sandburg, the poet, has put a poet's patience and a poet's vision into a beautiful, monumental prose story of Abraham Lincoln... Detail is piled upon detail. Little details, seemingly irrelevant, apparently incompetent when they are added to other details, become tremendously material. That is the Sandburg method; the method of the naturalist artist. . . . No one but a poet with a poet's patience and a poet's understanding heart could have written this book. . . . Here stands no plaster saint. . . . Here on the prairie, Sandburg, the poet is at home, and here this Lincoln, made with the poet's hands, takes on reality, strong, rank, pungent, gorgeous reality."

Indeed, Lincoln had taken on reality for my grandfather as well as for his readers. When a reporter asked him what had moved him to continue with the story of Lincoln after the first volumes, the poet said simply, "That son-of-a-gun Lincoln grows on you."

His interest in Lincoln had been one that had grown gradually and naturally over many years. As a young boy he had often taken a shortcut across the campus of Knox College in Galesburg and seen the bronze tablets stating that on October 7, 1858, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas had met on that spot for the fifth joint debate in the famous senatorial contest. And, growing up in Galesburg, he had known people who had seen Lincoln, who had seen the war, and who still talked of them both. In the preface to *The Prairie Years*, my grandfather gives this example, "The mayor of Galesburg in 1858, Henry Sanderson, is the only individual on record,



... and Stephen A. Douglas.

perhaps, who carried warm cistern water to a bathtub for Lincoln and saw Lincoln taking a bath."

My grandfather had first thought of writing a biography of Lincoln for young people. He had been working on the Rootabaga stories, and his mind was on children and the considerable lack of native, American literature that was available to them. To his publisher, Alfred Harcourt, he had outlined a 400-page *Boy's Life of Lincoln*.

Two years later, however, he walked into his publisher's office with a manuscript to fill the two-volume, 344,000-word, *The Prairie Years*. Lincoln had indeed taken hold of Carl Sandburg. He had said in a letter, during the writing of *The Prairie Years*, "The wife and friends are saying the job will kill me if I don't slow down, but it's exactly the kind of a job that with me has to be a spurt job; if I had one of those retentive efficiency memories that took a never-let-go grip on names, dates, places, actions, I could slow down—One thing I'm sure of; the biggest part of American history has all to be rewritten; and it will be done."

He had originally planned to stop with *The Prairie Years*, which ended with Lincoln's election as President. There would be a preface to the two volumes which would sum up the four years to follow—the four years before the assassination. But he was caught with the story and found it impossible to stop. Lincoln had become alive to him and the times of the Civil War were a mystery that needed unfolding. As the critics noted when the volumes were completed, they were the story, not only of the man, the President, but, also, of the age. My grandfather had written to Harcourt, "Sometimes I think the Lincoln book will be a sort of History and Old Testament of the United States, a joke almanac, prayer collect, and compendium of essential facts."

While writing *The Prairie Years*, Carl Sandburg had still worked at the Chicago *Daily News*, primarily as the movie critic. The family was living in Elmhurst, Illinois, at the time. He would leave my grandmother and the girls on Sunday morning and take the train into Chicago, arriving there around 11 o'clock, when the movie theaters opened. Then he would watch three new releases and go to the newspaper office to write his reviews. He stayed overnight at a friend's home and repeated his actions the next day, also

doing some work for a column that would appear the next Saturday. Then he headed home. Tuesday through Saturday, he had time for himself and his own writing. From 1920 to 1925, besides writing *The Prairie Years*, he also saw published two volumes of poetry, *Smoke and Steel* and *Slabs of the Sunburnt West*, and the two Rootabaga books.

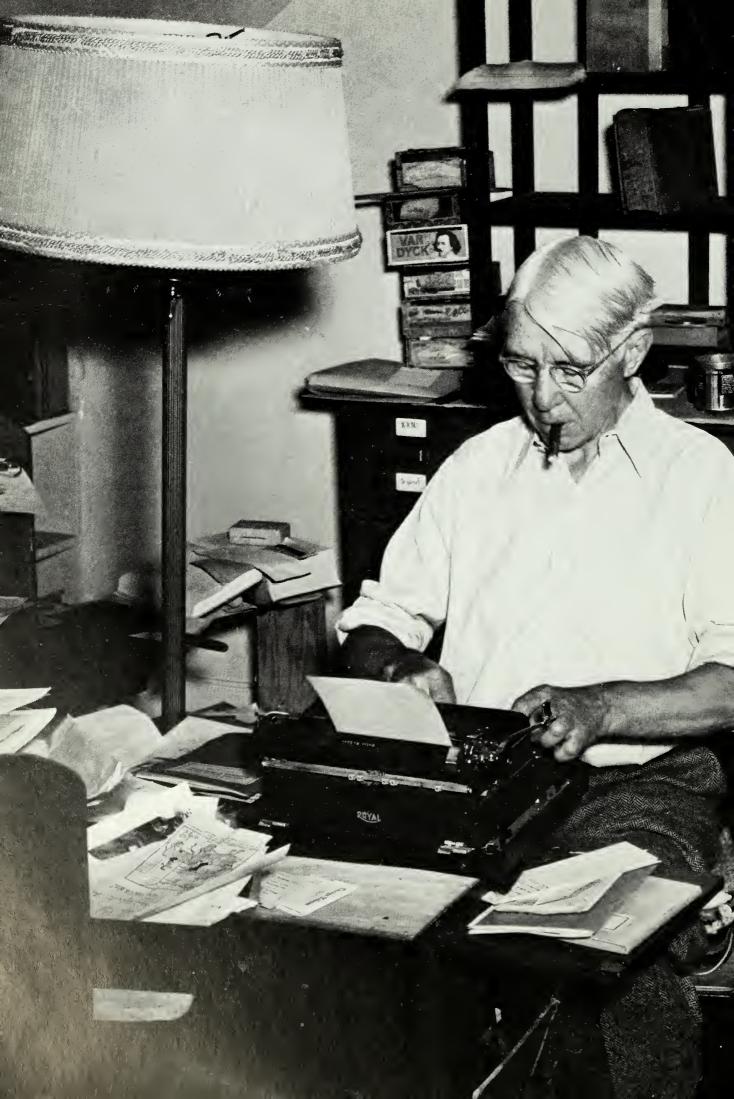
Then, in fall of 1925, *Pictorial Review* paid \$20,000 for the exclusive right to publish one episode a month from *The Prairie Years*, in six issues beginning October 1925. My grandfather, who was lecturing in Texas at the time, received a telegram from Alfred Harcourt telling him of the deal, and he wrote back: "This is the first time I've understood something about the emotions of holding the lucky number in a lottery." To my grandmother he telegrammed: HARCOURT WIRES BOOK SERIAL RIGHTS SOLD TO PICTORIAL REVIEW FOR TWENTY THOUSAND FIX THE FLIVVER AND BUY A WILD EASTER HAT.

My grandmother wired back, saying in part, YOU MUST TAKE LONG VACATION FROM ALL WORK THIS SUMMER ALL JUBILATING HERE IN GAY EASTER BONNETS... Whether or not she "fixed the flivver," she was now able to buy a small house called "Wren Cottage" for the family at Tower Hill, near Harbert, Michigan, and she began to design their home to be built in Harbert on a sand dune beside the lake. In the first year of publication, 48,000 sets of *The Prairie Years* were sold. And it was not long after that that my grandfather was able to give up his job as movie critic at the *Daily News*.

To support the family while he worked on the long job of writing Abraham Lincoln: The War Years, it was necessary for him to go on the lecture route part of every year. His lecturing was primarily scheduled for the winter months, so that from April to October he could remain at home, working on the continuation of the Lincoln biography and other writing. The traveling provided him with an opportunity to visit libraries and collections of Lincoln materials in all parts of the country. He met a great variety of people who were somehow connected with the Lincoln story—collectors, historians, sons and daughters of those who had played a part in the drama of the Civil War times. The more involved he became, the more mysterious and beckoning the work became. His search even sent him to the White



The Rail Splitter dwarfs his biographer in Chicago's Garfield Park in 1957.



Smoking a cigar, Sandburg pecks away at his typewriter in his top-floor office at Connemara.

House a number of times. In his foreword to *The War Years* he gives thanks "To President Franklin Delano Roosevelt for personally conducting me in 1937 to Lincoln corners of special interest in the White House..."

He went through newspapers of the era, from the North and from the South, saying that he found "them more indicative and explanatory and mystifying and paradoxical than any other source of utterance and revelation." In the first year of his research, he looked through more than 1,000 books. And during his years of work, he read through every page of the 133 volumes ("Count 'em," he says in the foreword to his volumes) of the Official Record of the Rebellion and of the Congressional Globe with its speeches and roll calls, "with its monotony of platitudes, broken suddenly by flashes of abrupt genius or forthright and appealing logic or plain information lighting the motives of men as to why there is a war on. . . . In these two wildernesses of words I have picked my way carefully, sometimes drearily and with hope and patience, or again fascinated and enthralled by the basic stuff of indisputably great human action in play before my eyes."

During the years of research on *The War Years*, my grandfather commonly worked 16 to 18 hours a day. At times there were serious problems with headaches and with his eyes. He found relief in his guitar and in his family and in long walks along the Lake Michigan shoreline. The family had now moved into the tall, many-windowed Harbert house overlooking the lake, the building of which my grandmother had supervised. In my grandfather's loft-like study on the third floor was a cot covered with an Indian blanket, a wood stove, and stacks and shelves of books related to the Lincoln story. He had amassed a considerable library on Lincoln, the surplus books overflowing to the loft over the goat barn and milk house. In his room, amid a forest of notes and papers, and on the third-story deck outside beneath the bright sun, my grandfather worked, sitting before a typewriter set on an orange crate. He told people who remarked on the unusual piece of furniture, "If General Grant could command his troops from an old crate, I can certainly write about it from one."

Thirteen years after the publication of *The Prairie Years*, Carl Sandburg had finished *Abraham Lin-*

coln: The War Years, which covered the last four years of Lincoln's life. In The War Years, there are approximately 1,175,000 words, and he compares this in his foreword to the volumes to the Bible's 926,877 words and to Shakespeare's complete works which run 1,025,000 words.

The work was published on December 1, 1939, and the critics, historians, and readers were almost unanimous in their reception of the biography. The Lincoln scholar Paul M. Angle said, "This biography stands alone. If the word 'incomparable' be given its literal meaning, only this book among the thousands which deal with the life of Lincoln deserves it. Although its author, prior to publication, was known chiefly as a poet, *The Prairie Years* and its sequel have made him the most famous of modern biographers."

The Prairie Years and The War Years both tell the story not only of Lincoln, but, also, of the times in which he lived. The marked difference between the two is the tremendous amount of research that stood behind the writing of The War Years. The Prairie Years was more the kind of biography that people had expected of a poet. There were lyrical passages in it that accounted for much of its interest and power. In the chapter dealing with the death of Lincoln's mother my grandfather had written: "So the woman, Nancy Hanks, died, thirty-six years old, a pioneer sacrifice, with memories of monotonous, endless everyday chores, of mystic Bible verses read over and over for their promises, and with memories of blue wistful hills and a summer when the crabapple blossoms flamed white and she carried a boy-child into the world...."

There are few such poetic passages in *The War Years. Time* magazine compared the work with *The Prairie Years*, saying, in part, "This four-volume biography as it now stands completed is a work whose meaning will not soon be exhausted, whose greatness will not soon be estimated. It can be said that no U.S. biography surpasses it in wealth of documentation and fidelity to fact, that none, not even Douglas Southall Freeman's monumental 'Robert E. Lee,' can compare with it in strength, scope and beauty. . . . H.L. Mencken believed *The Prairie Years* to be 'the best American biography.' In relation to *The War Years* it is like a lyric prologue to an

inconceivably complex and crowded tragedy."

The strength of *The War Years* lies greatly in the richness and the selection of the details, and in the restraint of the author's tone. My grandfather seemed to feel that the times and the people who moved within them spoke most eloquently for themselves. He remarked once, "Take that Unionist mountaineer yell, 'For God's sake, let South Carolina nullify, revolute, secesh and be damned!' What historian would dare try to render that in his own words?"

More than one reader of the four volumes commented on how Carl Sandburg's background as a reporter had helped him in his role as a biographer. The Lincoln scholar, Lloyd Lewis, wrote in *The New* York Herald Tribune, "It has been the best research job yet done on Lincoln-possibly on any American. ... There has probably never been such a summoning of witnesses before in American literature or law, no such marshaling of incident, such sifting of rumor, such collecting of evidence, eye-witness and hearsay, as the author here produces. They illumine the manifold cares of the President, the Union's political crisis, the draft chaos, the impact of the war upon housewives, Europeans, Negro slaves. In the thirty-odd years across which he has been collecting Lincolniana, Sandburg has gone everywhere he heard a Lincoln letter or an observation on the man might be stored. And his product is, like his poems, a singularly eloquent use of contemporary anecdote and language. What people said about Lincoln, what they saw him do, what they heard he said and did-it is all here, as detailed as Dostoevski, as American as Mark Twain."

And in the *Yale Review* of 1939, Henry Steele Commager spoke of the depth of detail in *The War Years*, "Perhaps this is not the whole of the Civil War, but it is difficult to believe that this is not the whole of Lincoln during the war years."

Yet, as more than one reviewer noted, all the research of *The War Years* might have been in vain had it not been for the heart of the poet in Carl Sandburg. His sensitivity to the President, and to the people and the times which surrounded him, was part of what set the biography apart from many that had been written before. Max Lerner, writing in *The New Republic*, noted the "deep and shrewd tenderness for common people throughout the book, such as



The Steichens and Sandburgs visited President Johnson and toured the White House on April 20, 1964. Johnson gave Sandburg the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

On February 12, 1959, the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, Sandburg addressed a joint session of Congress.

one might expect from the author of *The People*, *Yes.*" And he further saw a parallel between the style of Carl Sandburg the biographer and of Carl Sandburg the poet: "The Sandburg here is the Sandburg of the Chicago poems, celebrating America and the obscure ways of life, setting his words down with neither elegance nor precision but with a certain random obliqueness that nevertheless manages almost always to reach its object." It was perhaps those very aspects of my grandfather's poetry to which some early critics had objected that now made the biography of Lincoln so powerful.

Sandburg's enormous interest in Lincoln led to other books besides the complete six-volume work. Finding Lincoln's wife to be a fascinating character to whom he could not do justice in his biography of the President, he paused in his research on *The War Years*—six years after *The Prairie Years* was published and seven years before *The War Years* would be ready—and wrote *Mary Lincoln*, *Wife and Widow*, with an appendix by Paul M. Angle.

Two Lincoln collectors to whom my grandfather felt most indebted for the illustrations he used in his biography were Frederick Hill Meserve and Oliver R. Barrett. In 1944 he collaborated with Meserve on a book, *The Photographs of Abraham Lincoln*, and in 1949 Sandburg published *Lincoln Collector: The Story of Oliver R. Barrett's Great Private Collection*.

My grandfather was aware that the relatively high price of his long biography of Lincoln might put it out of the reach of many readers who wished to own it. So, for several years, while living at Connemara, he worked on The Prairie Years and The War Years-One-Volume Edition. It was published in October of 1954. He had compressed more than 1.5 million words into 430,000, a painstaking job of which he said, "I had been a bracketeer. Now I became a deleter. . . . Very definitely I did not want to condense, abridge, or make a digest. My task or purpose was to compress or to distill." The Prairie Years, cut about 10 percent, was published in one volume in 1928; and its first 27 chapters were published in an illustrated edition for young readers under the title Abe Lincoln Grows Up in 1928. Later, in 1942, the four volumes of The War Years were shortened and partially rewritten to form the onevolume Storm Over The Land.



There were times during the writing of The War Years when my grandfather said that the small prayer, "Oh Lord, if Thou wilt permit me to finish this task, then Thou mayest have me," came to him often. Lincoln had truly become a part of his life and a part of the family's life. On the day that my grandfather completed the biography, he went to his bed, exhausted. Later he came upon the family's housekeeper, Martha Moorman, sitting before the final page of the book, which was still in the typewriter. There were tears rolling down her face. It was an emotion felt by all the members of the family, for they had all been more or less involved in the work. It had been common for my grandfather to read what he had found on a particular day in his research, or what he had written, to the family at the dining room table in the evenings. And members of the family, particularly Helga, had helped considerably in the typing and filing work that had been done.

There was even the presence of Lincoln in our house after we moved to Connemara in 1945. I was born after the publication of all six volumes, yet, growing up, I felt the reality of the man. His face was as familiar to me as that of Roy Rogers was to most children of the time. In odd corners of the house were Lincoln campaign buttons, mixed in with the acorns and buckeyes we collected on our walks, and there were mounted life masks of Lincoln and photographs and coins from the Civil War. On all the shelves in the house were books on the President and in the pastures beyond the front porch stood two great, spreading trees which we called the "Abraham Lincoln Oak" and the "Robert E. Lee Oak." As a child, I thought of Lincoln as a relative whom I, somehow, had not yet met.

On February 12, 1959, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Lincoln, my grandfather addressed a joint session of Congress. He opened the address, saying, "Not often in the story of mankind does a man arrive on earth who is both steel and velvet, who is as hard as rock and soft as drifting fog, who holds in his heart and mind the paradox of terrible storm and peace unspeakable and perfect...."

Carl Sandburg was one of the few private citizens who has ever been asked to address a joint session of Congress. The Senators and Representatives, the members of the Supreme Court, the Cabinet, and the attending diplomats all rose and gave him a standing ovation. It was an honor deeply felt, and one that stood alongside the housekeeper's tears as a tribute to him as a biographer.

Song and Guitar

In the early morning at Connemara, my Aunt Janet would carry a tray up the steps to the hall outside my grandfather's bedroom. She would leave it outside the door, and when he awoke he would take it to his bedside. On the tray was a Thermos of coffee, a glass of goat's milk, a container of honey, some fruit and cheese, and a few slices of black pumpernickel bread. My grandfather would eat all or part of this leisurely as he read or made notes in bed. The hour might be mid- to late-morning or it might even be early afternoon, if he had been working far into the night. It was not unusual for us to see his study light still burning as we went off to the barn in the pale, coming light of early dawn. Sometimes he would lean to his window and exchange "hallos" with us as we set out, and then he would retire to his bed.

Whether he awoke from his rest in morning or early afternoon, he would begin his day then, not only with the breakfast tray and books but also with music. An ancient standing record player was in his bedroom and there were stacks upon stacks of records there and on top of the filing cabinets in the hall. Most of the records were of classical music, many of the guitar. Recordings by his friend, Andrés Segovia, were among my grandfather's favorites.

The music would reach us below, softly, filtered by doors and floors. We would know he was awake, that he would be doing his exercises in time, bending and reaching, lifting and swinging Indian clubs or books with ease and tempo. Eventually, the phonograph music would halt and he would descend the stairs, carrying the emptied tray and some books or papers. But the air would not be quiet. More often than not, he would be singing as he came down the stairs—the deep, resonant voice carrying easily, the melody filling the house. He would even sometimes practice the scales with his voice. And, sitting in a chair later, he would practice his chords on the guitar. If, in the pressure of his work, music had

been forgotten for awhile, there might be a shorthand note to himself on his desk, showing his concern, "kp t gtr nd sngs."

Music was a part of our life, and it was largely my grandfather who made it so. As a family, we sang together often, usually to his guitar. The instrument and songs were a part of our picnics on top of Glassy Mountain or on the rock behind the house; they were a part of my brother's and my puppet shows; they were a part of so many evenings spent in the dining room or the front room with visitors, or simply as a family. When my grandfather was away on lecture trips, it was the absence of his voice that most emptied the house.

His love for music went back to his childhood. There had been a piano in the family parlor in the later years of growing up in Galesburg, and his sister, Esther, had even considered playing the piano professionally. Carl Sandburg's own first public singing performance, as it were, did not take place in a parlor or a hall, however. Most likely it occurred during his travels with the hoboes. As he said later, spending time with these people he would never see again had made it easy for him to tell stories and try out his songs.

There were tunes that he picked up during that period that he carried with him the rest of his life. One that we all sang later as a family, was "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum." He described it in his *American Songbag* as an "old song heard at the water tanks of railroads in Kansas in 1897 and from harvest hands who worked in the wheat fields of Pawnee County. ..." Its opening lines reflected the men's feelings and their plight: "Oh why don't you work like other men do? How the hell can I work when there's no work to do?"

After college, my grandfather learned new songs from new strangers on his travels while selling stereographs and he undoubtedly found singing an easy way of passing the many hours and distances while walking or riding his bicycle from town to town.

Then, in the very early years of marriage, he wrote to my grandmother, who was visiting her parents, of an aquisition that had perhaps been prompted by the loneliness of separation: "I forgot to tell you that . . . (we) now have a guitar and there will be songs

warbled and melodies whistled to the low Mexican thrumming of Paula and Cully's new stringed instrument...."

From that point on, the guitar and my grandfather gradually became more and more a part of one another. The lightness and mobility of the instrument suited his wandering ways; they became companions on travels over the country's landscape, and into so many homes of strangers and friends.

In the early 1920s, he began to travel the lecture circuit again, now reading and remarking on his own works instead of those of Whitman and Shaw, as he had done so much earlier. With increasing frequency he began to close his program with a half or quarter hour of songs. The first time he tried it, he stated to the audience that they could get up and leave if they wished to, that he was only doing what he would be doing if he were at home. But they stayed, and they seemed to like it.

There was an unpolished reality to his singing. An early review of one of these recitals described it as "a grand show! . . . No evening clothes, no dissertations on art: Carl Sandburg read, then brought forth a guitar of his and sang, most delicately and lovably, old ballads: 'Jesse James,' 'Frankie and Albert were Sweethearts,' 'The Boll Weevil' and 'This Morning, This Evening, So Soon.' . . . Sandburg is a kingly reader. His reading is exactly as beautiful as his poetry and his person. He is one of the most completely, successfully alive human beings I ever saw: from his sturdy shoes to the tuft of hard gray hair over his granite eyes, to his voice and his words, from the majestic dignity of his voice to the dignity of his poems—Carl Sandburg is, in and out, thoroughly expressive of one beauty and one glory—himself.

Audiences seemed to enjoy the easy pace and the timbre of his voice, even if they were unaccustomed to the sometimes brutal themes of the songs. He would occasionally preface his singing by saying, "There may be murder, crime and adultery in these folk songs, but after all not more than you find in the average grand opera." Harry Hansen said of his friend's recitals, "There is this about Carl's singing: his themes are elemental, the words are often crude, uncouth, but his rendering is never coarse. One reason is that Carl has a feeling for strong, homely words, but not for obscenity. . . .



Music was an important part of family life. Sandburg often played the guitar for his wife and daughters, singing folk songs he collected over the years.

There were some who felt that Sandburg was somehow demeaning himself by performing with his guitar. The critic Malcolm Cowley asked, "Why don't you smash your charming damned guitar, and write?" But my grandfather ignored the request, just as he had pushed aside his father's distrust of the writing of poetry, just as he had ignored those who thought that a poet should not meddle with history and biography. Gradually, he became more and more in demand on stages and in halls. He had natural instincts as a performer and he genuinely liked his audiences and his contact with them. Perhaps it was a happy balance with the months spent in relative seclusion while he was writing.

Often, after his recitals, he would spend the night in the homes of the townspeople, rather than at a hotel. And his hosts in the varying towns and regions would sometimes sing to him words and tunes that he had not heard before. His interest in the folk songs that he heard grew rapidly; it was much like his search into the slang and proverbs of America that had filled his book of poetry, *The People, Yes.* The songs were a mirror of American history and of American people, their feelings and their lives.

Sandburg began to gather together the songs that he heard, and, when he would go to libraries to do research on his Lincoln work, he would also look into books on the songs of the region. By the mid-1920s, he had gathered a sheaf of songs, most of them taken from the lips of people he had met, rather than from the pages of books. In 1927, 280 of these songs were published in *The American Songbag*, one of the first collections of authentic American folk songs. In 1950, it was followed by Carl Sandburg's *New American Songbag*.

Reading the introduction to the various songs in *The American Songbag* is often like reading a journal of Sandburg's travels. He tells of the people with whom he sang, and of the late night sessions that followed his programs in the small and large burgs across the country. Then, too, in his notes on each song, he occasionally gives new light on a verse by telling of the song's worth to him personally. Of "Barbara Allen" he says in closing, "Sometimes in the singing of this song, I get the feel of old, gnarled thornapple trees and white crabapple blossoms printed momentarily on a blue sky, of evanescent things, of

the paradox of tender and cruel forces operating together in life. . . ." In his songbooks, there are songs of the old West, minstrel songs, songs of the South and the Southern mountains, railroad songs, prison songs, blues, ballads, and short, comic ditties. In the introduction he said, "It is an All-American affair, marshaling the genius of thousands of original singing Americans."

My grandfather's love for music continued into the very last days of his life. In his final years, when he was ill, his guitars lay stilled, in the arms of chairs or on the piano in the front room. But the voice still echoed forth. Often, he would fill with song my grandmother's spacious white room where he slept now.

And, even in the very last days of his life, when he was too weak to sing, there was music. It had been his habit all the time we lived at Connemara to now and then go to the bay window of my grandmother's room and lie on a day couch to listen to phonograph music. He would wrap a scarf loosely over his eyes to cover and rest them. The western, afternoon light would come in gently, passing my grandmother's African violets on the window sills, filtering through the leaves of the trees across the drive from the windows—the hemlocks and bamboos, the fan-leafed ginkgo, the giant old holly, the *Magnolia grandiflora* with its dark, shining leaves.

Carl Sandburg died on July 22, 1967, in this same room. On the round table in the bay window, in a bowl of water, rested one of the magnolia's blooms, the crisp, white petals reaching a foot across, the golden heart sending forth a honey-lemon scent that reached to the walls and filled them. He lay on a rented hospital bed now, not on the day couch, but there were the same trees and mountains beyond the windows, the same extraordinary peace that always seemed present in my grandmother's room. And, the afternoon before he died, there was the same music, too—Chopin and the sound of Segovia's guitar.

There was never to be as much music in the house again after that summer's day. My grandmother stated to the telephoning press, in her typically simple style, "Now Carl belongs to the ages."

The Varied Man

"There was puzzlement as to whether I was a poet, a



Hollywood beckoned a few times, and Sandburg accepted the challenge, providing scripts and advice. In these ventures he became friends with several stars. Here he visits with one of them, Marilyn Monroe, in New York.

biographer, a wandering troubadour with a guitar, a midwest Hans Christian Andersen, or a historian of current events whose newspaper reporting was gathered into a book...."

So wrote my grandfather in 1950. And this list of his varied pursuits was not complete, for at the age of 65 he had begun his first novel, saying, "I had to try it. I had to have it like women have to have babies." The novel, Remembrance Rock, took five years to complete and it ran 1,067 pages in length. It actually comprised three independent novels, a prologue, and an epilogue-each narrative covering a different era in America's history. Remembrance Rock was another form through which Carl Sandburg expressed himself and it was was yet another form through which he expressed his fascination with and devotion to America and her promise. The critic, Thomas Lask, called it "not so much a novel, as a long ruminative essay on 'The American Dream.'" The toast that is given by the women in the varying sections of the book summarizes the author's feelings about the problems that have faced the country and with which the country has dealt: "To the storms to come and the stars coming after the storm."

As with most of Carl Sandburg's ventures throughout his life, dating from the time when his father had scowled at him as he stepped out the door to ride the freight cars with the hoboes, there were those who were skeptical of his experiment with novel writing. One reviewer described the book as "a huge, muddled and meaningless compendium." Other critics, however, viewed it as "an epic," "an opera," "a symphony," and "a sermon."

My grandfather was not much concerned with the critics' views. He had always followed his own instincts and had worked to satisfy himself. He had even been too independent to allow himself to belong to any literary circles. During the 1920s he had been introduced to many of the poets and writers of that era, but, though he kept up some friendships, he soon steered clear of the groups that so many others yearned to belong to. He felt that cliques, whether literary or social, were too often counter-productive, too often simply "exclusive," and, that, he said, was the most abominable word in the English language.



Carl and Lilian Sandburg shared a mutual respect and love that allowed for strong individuality. That seemed to be a secret of their successful marriage, which came to an end after 59 years with his death on July 22, 1967, at Comemara.

Carl Sandburg thrived on diversity—on the challenges that it posed and the interest that it gave to life. It was part of what tied him so strongly to America. Asked once if he would like ever to return to Sweden, the land of his forefathers, to live, he replied that, no, he would miss too much walking down a street and seeing the faces of the varying cultures and races that made up America.

My grandfather would continue to welcome challenges right up until the end of his life; he would continue writing, singing, speaking—and doing it in his independent way. In his 70s, at Connemara, he would write his autobiography, Always the Young Strangers, which would be hailed by Robert Sherwood in The New York Times as the greatest autobiography ever written by an American. And in his 80s, he would be asked to do some writing for the George Stevens' movie, The Greatest Story Ever Told. As strangers worried that the poet might be "selling his soul" to Hollywood, he would serenely pick up his bags and leave for a stay in California. There he would go to work and be photographed with Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor, Milton Berle, and others and, then, when the film was completed, he would return home, traveling valise in hand, soul intact.

This was Carl Sandburg. This was the man who had written as a college student: "Anybody can be a shrouded Sphinx of silence, but to get anywhere . . . you have to experiment and be willing to shake hands with a mistake once a week."

In his youth, he had written, too: "I may keep this boyheart of mine, with tears for the tragic, love for the beautiful, laughter at folly, and silent reverent contemplation of the common and everyday mysteries. . . . I have never been in such hard luck that I could not smile at myself in reproach as I thought of the man who fell down one of these elevator shafts. It was a nine-story building. He was going head first and as he passed each floor, he yelled out, 'all right so far!'

"I am an idealist. I don't know where I'm going but I'm on the way."

He had limited patience with people who always depended upon others to steer them through doubts or difficulties. At Connemara he received many manuscripts from aspiring authors who wanted assistance, suggestions, easy guidelines for success; and

he received many letters from students who wanted "a brief history of poetry, what it is and why people write it. . . ." When he replied to these letters or returned these manuscripts, it was usually with a note advising the person to follow his own instincts and to "never be afraid of a little hard work. . . ."

It is interesting to note that almost every stranger who came to visit him at Connemara in his last years would ask my grandmother the one question, "Is he still working, still writing?" Though the questioners, themselves, might be retired, might even have become complacent and bored with life's offerings, they recognized in Carl Sandburg the struggler, the seeker, the man who had said in his early 20s, "The glory of life is that we never get anywhere. We are always going somewhere."

If there is, after all, a secret to success, perhaps that was the secret to Carl Sandburg's—that, though he was easily satisfied when it came to the necessities and the comforts of life, he never accepted the notion that there were limits, confines, to one's capabilities, one's life itself. He wrote in his "Notes for a Preface" to Complete Poems: "All my life I have been trying to learn to read, to see and hear, and to write. At sixty-five I began my first novel, and the five years lacking a month I took to finish it, I was still traveling, still a seeker. I should like to think that as I go on writing there will be sentences truly alive, with verbs quivering, with nouns giving color and echoes. It could be, in the grace of God, I shall live to be eighty-nine, as did Hokusai, and speaking my farewell to earthly scenes, I might paraphrase: 'If God had let me live five years longer I should have been a writer."





Visiting the Park

When the Sandburg family moved from Michigan to North Carolina in 1945, many people were surprised that the celebrator of bustling Chicago could settle in the relatively unpopulated mountainous region of western North Carolina. Spend some time in this area and you will readily see why it was so appealing to the family. The estate's 100 hectares (247 acres) provided the quietude required by the writer and the open rolling fields and moderate climate required by the goat farmers, Mrs. Sandburg and daughter Helga.

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site was authorized by Congress on October 17, 1968, established on October 27, 1972, and opened to the public on May 11, 1974. The park is located in Flat Rock, 4.8 kilometers (3 miles) south of Hendersonville. Turn off U.S. 25 onto Little River Road at the Flat Rock Post Office, and you will quickly see the entrance to the parking lot on the left. The park is 42 kilometers (26 miles) south of Asheville, which is served by airlines and buses. Buses also serve Hendersonville. Rental cars and taxis may be obtained in Asheville or at the airport. Food and lodging facilities are located in Flat Rock, Hendersonville, and Asheville. Tent and trailer camping sites are nearby. For tourist information, write to: Greater Hendersonville Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 489, Hendersonville, North Carolina 28793 (telephone 704-692-1413); or to the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, 151 Haywood Street, Asheville, North Carolina 28801 (704-258-5200). The park superintendent's address is: Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, P.O. Box 395, Flat Rock, North Carolina 28731. The telephone number is 704-693-4178.

The park is open daily except for Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1. After viewing a short orienta-

tion program at the Visitor Information Center, walk to the main house for a guided tour. Access assistance for the handicapped is provided.

The house was built about 1838 by Christopher Gustavus Memminger, who called the estate Rock Hill. He and so many other residents of Charleston, South Carolina, built estates here to escape that city's heat and humidity that Flat Rock became known as the "little Charleston of the mountains." Memminger eventually became Secretary of the Confederate Treasury. After his death, the property passed briefly to the Col. William Gregg family and then to Capt. Ellison Adger Smyth, a textile tycoon who renamed it Connemara in honor of his Irish ancestry. Heirs sold it to the Sandburgs in 1945, and the author spent the last 22 years of his life here. Today the property is a National Historic Site within a National Historic District embracing much of the Flat Rock area.

After you tour the house, take a self-guiding tour of the grounds and the farm buildings that quartered Mrs. Sandburg's highly successful goatbreeding operation (see pages 116-117). "We didn't buy a farm," Sandburg often said, "we bought a small village." What had been an estate soon became a working farm run by the family and various caretaker-handymen.

Summer Park Service programs presented under the trees next to the main house include dramatic readings and musical renditions from Sandburg's *The American Songbag*. Also, apprentice actors and actresses from the Vagabond Players at Flat Rock Playhouse across the road perform "The World of Carl Sandburg" and "Rootabaga Stories."

While you are in the Flat Rock area, consider visiting Blue Ridge Parkway and Great Smoky Mountains National

Park. Both offer scenic mountain views and bountiful recreational opportunities. Two other nearby National Park System sites commemorate American victories in the Revolutionary War: Kings Mountain National Military Park near Kings Mountain, North Carolina, and Cowpens National Battlefield near Chesnee, South Carolina. Other places of interest include the Flat Rock Playhouse, the State Theater of North Carolina; Pisgah National Forest, which includes self-guiding tours of the first forestry school in America; Biltmore House and Gardens, a Vanderbilt estate; Holmes State Forest, which has trails and picnic facilities; Chimney Rock Park, a recreational area; Church of St. John in the Wilderness, location of the funeral service for Sandburg and burial site of Christopher Memminger; and the Thomas Wolfe Memorial home in Asheville.

For those interested in other sites associated with Carl Sandburg, we suggest you visit his birthplace in Galesburg, Illinois (see photo on page 24). Sandburg lived in this house until he was about three. Few of the furnishings were actually owned by the family; most are representative of the period. Some materials associated with Abraham Lincoln are on display. Behind the house is Sandburg Park, where Sandburg's ashes were placed by Mrs. Sandburg October 1, 1967. The park has been landscaped with various trees from Connemara. For more information, write to Illinois State Historical Library, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois 62706 (telephone 217-782-4836). Persons interested in studying Sandburg manuscripts, papers, and other materials should contact the Carl Sandburg Collection, Rare Book Room, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1408 West Gregory Drive, Urbana, Illinois 61801 (telephone 217-333-3777).





The Vagabond Players put on "Rootabaga Stories" for visitors to the park.

With perhaps less sophistication, but with just as much enthusiasm, a school group stages its own show with the help of the park staff.

Connemara at a Glance

Use this map as your guide as you tour Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site. See the following pages for more details.

- Main House Visit the information center in the basement and take a guided tour of the house, which was built about 1838 and became the Sandburg family's home in 1945.
- **2 Family Garage** A kitchen in the old days, this building was used as a garage by the Sandburgs.
- **3**Chickenhouse The Sandburgs kept chickens in one side of this old washhouse and the adjoining fenced lot. The other side housed kid goats.
- 4 Pumphouse
- **Springhouse**Formerly a springhouse, this structure was used for curing goat cheese made by Mrs. Sandburg and daughter Helga.
- **6** Woodshed
- Swedish House Sandburg stored magazines, books, and other research materials in this building.
- **Tenant House** Farm employees occasionally resided in this "little white house," as the family called it.
- **9 Gazebo** Flower garden tools were stored here. In the adjacent garden were herbs or flowers.
- Goat or Donkey House This building provided shelter for goats or the pet Sicilian donkey often kept by the Sandburgs in this "front pasture."
- one of Sandburg's favorites. It was built originally to store blocks of ice cut from farm lakes and ponds. Only the subterranean walls remain today. The short, peaked roof deteriorated and the Sandburgs removed it.
- **2** Farm Manager's House Located close to the barn area, this house traditionally was the home of the Sandburgs' goat herdsman and general caretaker.

- **Greenhouse** Sometimes the cellar was used for winter bulb storage and the upper portion for starting plants for the farm's many flower gardens tended by Mrs. Sandburg.
- **Barn Pumphouse**
- Isolation Quarters This structure and adjoining two lots quartered sick goats that had to be separated from the rest of the herd.
- **Barn Garage** The Sandburgs stored equipment used on the farm in this building at the entrance to the barn area. Occasionally the trucks were backed out and evening square dances were held in the garage by the herdsman's family and their guests.
- **Vegetable Garden** Mrs. Sandburg maintained the vegetable gardens here for her family and that of the herdsman.
- Barnyard and Corncrib Milking does were kept in the barn with access to the barnyard at night and when the pastures were out of season or not available. Doe kids were kept in a separate area.
- **Buck Kid Quarters** Buck kids were housed in this building and adjoining two lots until they were old enough to be shipped to their new homes.
- Main Goat Barn Does were housed, fed, and milked regularly in this barn. The barn also had quarters for doe kids.
- **2)** Horse Barn Saddle and work horses and tack were kept in this barn.
- **2** Cowshed A family milk cow was kept here for the convenience of the herdsman.
- Storage Shed
- 28ilo The Sandburgs admired the silo and left it standing even though they did not use it.
- Milkhouse Various processes, such as the separation of milk for cream, the churning of butter, and the bottling of goat milk were performed in this building.



House Tour-The Main Floor



Living room



Downstairs study

As you tour the house you will note that the Sandburg family lived casually. To them Connemara was not an estate but a writer's hideaway and a working farm. Over the years they had their share of guests, but they made no pretenses at formal living. Simplicity was the rule, as indicated by the functional furnishings.

The family sometimes gathered in the **living room** after dinner to sing along while Sandburg played the guitar. Daughter Margaret played the piano and gave lessons here to her niece and nephew. The many canes and walking sticks-were given as a collection by a friend. On the walls are photographs by Edward Steichen, Mrs. Sandburg's brother.

The downstair's study served as an office where Sandburg worked with his secretary on correspondence and manuscripts. It usually was piled high with filing boxes and books. When the family moved to Connemara in 1945, there was a wartime shortage of wood, so they brought along a supply of boards from the bookcases of the Michigan house from which to build many floor-to-ceiling bookcases. The books were organized according to subjects and projects. In 1955 much of Sandburg's collection of manuscripts, letters, books, and other items was sold to the University of Illinois. More than 10,000 books and thousands of papers and notes remain at Connemara today. Sandburg read the many letters sent to him daily, but he did not answer all of them. Helga worked as his secretary in between her farm activities until she married and moved away in 1952. After that a part-time secretary typed the replies and sometimes worked for Mrs. Sandburg, too.

Mrs. Sandburg spent a good part of most days in the **farm office**, where she kept track of goat lineage records, sales correspondence with breeders and buyers, and farm expenses. She also managed the household upkeep while the author devoted his energy to his writings. Her office shows her organized, methodical ways. On the walls are photographs of many of her prize goats and pictures of the family.

The **dining room** was also the family room. After the evening meal, the children might bring Sandburg his guitar for a family sing, or he might read from his current work, or they might put on the radio to hear Jack Benny or Fibber McGee and Molly or the evening news. During the kidding season, very young kids occasionally were brought up from their basement stables to be admired and to play about the room awhile. Birds continually came to the window feeder and new as well as familiar species were noted, especially by the birdwatcher daughter, Margaret. The door on the east leads to Helga's and her children's bedrooms and bath. After they left Connemara, Margaret turned the area into her bedroom and study. On the east side of the house also is a small greenhouse, where plants were started and others nursed along and where winter cheeses were ripened.

On the west side of the house, beyond the kitchen and utility room, is Mrs. Sandburg's bedroom. She said that the purpose of windows is to frame nature, so there are no curtains in her bedroom or in most of the other rooms of the house. On the wall near the door is a favorite family photograph of Edward Steichen in his Navy captain's uniform. Sandburg used to come to this room for a mid-afternoon nap while listening to music.



Farm office

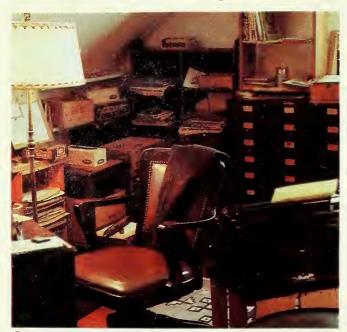


Dining room



Mrs. Sandburg's bedroom

House Tour-The Top Floor



Sandburg's study



Sandburg's bedroom

Carl Sandburg did most of his writing in his top-floor **office** amid a clutter of papers, books, filing crates, and boxes. He pinned notes and newspaper clippings to the walls and shelves and small boards he had cut for that purpose. He generally would come up here between 8 and 11 p.m. and work until 2 or 5 a.m. He'd peck away with two fingers at his typewriter, which often was perched on an orange crate.

After working into the early morning, he would go to sleep in the adjoining **bedroom**. He arose in mid- or late-morning depending on when he went to sleep. Then he would do some physical exercises while listening to classical or folk music. On the walls of his bedroom are favorite photographs. In these upper rooms he also kept his current reading books.

In the **hallway** is part of Sandburg's extensive collection of stereographs, a tangible remembrance of the days he sold them as a college student, some phonograph records, Lincoln books, and many songbooks, among others. Over the front porch is a small room he named the **Crow's Nest**, where guests were lodged and supplies kept. The view of the meadow sloping away from the house to the lake and of the distant mountains is magnificent. Also on this floor is daughter Janet's bedroom and another room used by Margaret in the early years as a bedroom.

The house tour ends in the basement, where kids were kept for a few weeks in late winter and early spring. Janet tended their feeding every three or four hours. Three doors lead into the center area of the basement, which contained an array of shelves filled with boxes of Sandburg materials—newspaper and magazine clippings, reviews, articles by and about him, overflow books from upstairs, and sundry items that fit nowhere else.

Grounds Tour

Though Carl Sandburg had nothing to do directly with the operation of the farm, he did enjoy walking about the grounds watching the farm activities and delighting in the natural life along the paths through the woods. We invite you to do the same, using the map on page 116 as your guide.

Sandburg admired the ginkgo tree on the west side of the house opposite Mrs. Sandburg's bedroom and the buckeye tree on the front drive and often picked up ginkgo leaves and buckeyes on his walks. Another of his favorite spots was the big granite rock beyond the hemlocks behind the house.

Besides the goat herd, the family had a large vegetable garden, a berry patch, an orchard, chickens, and hogs. The Park Service keeps a token goat herd and other farm animals in the barn area to convey an impression of Mrs. Sandburg's farming activities, an important aspect of Connemara.

The Memminger Path, which has been designated a National Recreation Trail, and Spring Trail take you to Big Glassy Mountain. Both are 2.1 kilometers (1.3 miles) long. The Little Glassy Mountain Trail starts behind the house and is only 0.1 kilometer (0.2 mile) long. The family regularly took walks to these spots enjoying the wildflowers, mosses, shrubs, and views. Take the time to do the same.

One of the interesting buildings on the grounds is the Swedish House, where the family stored extra books, magazines, and papers. Note the unusual trim on the building.



Enjoying a sip



Memminger Path



Swedish House

A Sandburg Chronology

1878

Born Jan. 6 in Galesburg, Ill., second child and eldest son of August and Clara Sandburg. Baptized Carl August, called Charles.

1883

Lilian Steichen, future wife, born May 1 in Hancock, Mich.

1891

Leaves school after eighth grade. Works as newsboy, milk delivery boy, and, in subsequent years, as barbershop shoeshine boy and milkman.

1896

Sees Robert Todd Lincoln at 40th anniversary of Lincoln-Douglas debate, Knox College, Galesburg.

1897

Rides boxcar to Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Iowa, and works on railroad section gang, as farmhand, as dishwasher, and at other odd jobs.

1898

Paints houses in Galesburg, and on April 26 enlists in Illinois Volunteers. Serves as private in Puerto Rico during Spanish-American War. Returns to Galesburg, enrolls as special student at Lombard College, Galesburg.

1899

Appointed to West Point but fails written examination in grammar and arithmetic. Enters Lombard College. Serves in town fire department and as school janitor.

1900

In summer sells stereographs with Frederick Dickinson.

1901

Editor-in-chief of The Lombard Review.

1902

Leaves college in spring before graduating; wanders country selling stereographs.

1904

Writes "Inklings & Idlings" articles in Galesburg *Evening Mail*, using pseudonym "Crimson." First poetry and a few prose pieces

published as booklet, *In Reckless Ecstasy*, by Prof. Philip Green Wright's Asgard Press.

1905

Becomes assitant editor of *To-Morrow* magazine in Chicago, which publishes some of his poems and pieces.

1906

Becomes lecturer on Walt Whitman and other subjects.

1907

Becomes associate editor and advertising man of *The Lyceumite*, Chicago. Continues lecturing at Elbert Hubbard's chautauquas. Asgard Press publishes *Incidentals*. Becomes organizer for Social-Democratic Party of Wisconsin. Meets Lilian Steichen, schoolteacher and fellow Socialist.

1908

Publishes *The Plaint of a Rose*. Marries Lilian Steichen on June 15. Thereafter uses "Carl," not "Charles," as given name. Campaigns in Wisconsin with Socialist presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs. Writes pamphlet *You and Your Job*.



1909

Becomes advertising copywriter for Kroeger's Department Store in Milwaukee, then reporter for Milwaukee *Sentinel*, *Journal*, and *Daily News*.

1910

Father dies March 10. Becomes private secretary to Emil Seidel, Socialist mayor of Milwaukee. Becomes city editor of Milwaukee *Social-Democratic Herald*. Works for Victor Berger's *Political Action*.

1911

Daughter Margaret born June 3.

1912

Writes for Berger's Milwaukee *Leader*. Moves to Chicago, joins *Evening World* briefly.

1913

Joins *The Day Book*, Chicago, then *System*, a management magazine, for which he writes under pseudonym R.E. Coulson. Writes under pseudonym Sidney Arnold for *American Artisan & Hardware Record*.

1914

Returns to *The Day Book*. Poems published in March issue of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. Wins Helen Haire Levinson Prize for best poems of the year. Moves to Maywood, a Chicago suburb.

1915

Writes articles on "That Walsh Report" and "Fixing the Pay of Railroad Men" for *The International Socialist Review*.

1916

Writes four poems for *The Little Review*. *Chicago Poems* published by Henry Holt. Daughter Janet born June 27.

1917

Covers labor conference for the American Federation of Labor at Omaha and Minneapolis Labor Convention. Joins Chicago *Daily News*.

1918

Joins Chicago *Evening American* briefly, then Newspaper Enterprise Association. Goes to Stockholm. Daughter Helga born Nov. 24. *Cornhuskers* published by Henry Holt. Returns to New York.

1919

Moves to NEA office in Chicago. Rejoins Chicago *Daily News* as labor reporter; becomes movie reviewer. Shares Poetry Society of America prize with Margaret Widdemer. Harcourt, Brace and Howe publishes *The Chicago Race Riots*. Moves to Elmhurst, a Chicago suburb.

1920

Smoke and Steel published by Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

1921

Shares Poetry Society of America Annual Book Award with Stephen Vincent Benét.

1922

Rootabaga Stories and Slabs of the Sunburnt West published by Harcourt, Brace and Company, now Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.



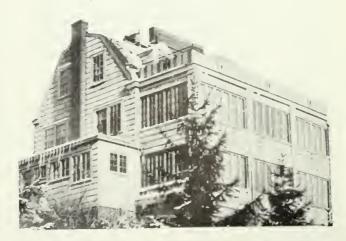
1923 *Rootabaga Pigeons* published.

1926

Two-volume Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years published by Harcourt, which publishes rest of his major works. Buys summer cottage at Tower Hill, Mich. Mother dies Dec. 30.

1927

The American Songbag published. Buys land in Harbert, Mich., on which to build home.



1928

Receives Litt.D. from Lombard College. Moves to Harbert. *Good Morning, America* and *Abe Lincoln Grows Up*, the first 26 chapters of *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years*, are published.

1929

Receives Litt.D. from Knox College. Steichen the Photographer and Rootabaga Country published.

1930

Potato Face and Early Moon published.

1931

Receives Litt.D. from Northwestern University. Sister Martha Goldstone dies.

1932

Leaves Chicago Daily News in May. Mary Lincoln: Wife and Widow published.

1936

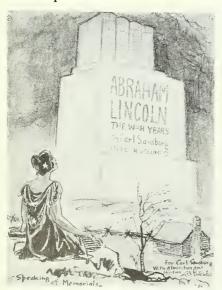
The People, Yes published.

1938

Receives Order of the North Star from King of Sweden.

1939

Four-volume *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years* published.



1940

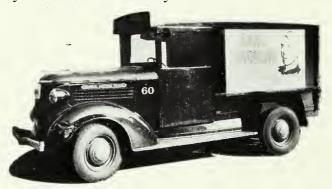
Wins Pulitzer Prize for history. Elected to American Academy of Arts and Letters. Receives Litt.D. degrees from Harvard, Yale, Wesleyan and New York Universities, and Lafayette College.

1941

Receives Litt.D. from Syracuse University and Dartmouth College. Grandson John Carl born Dec. 3 to Helga.

1942

Writes weekly column for Chicago *Times* syndicate, commentary for U.S. Government



film "Bomber," foreign broadcasts for Office of War Information, captions for *Road to Victory* exhibit at Museum of Modern Art. *Storm Over the Land*, excerpted from *The War Years*, published.

1943

Home Front Memo published. Grand-daughter Karlen Paula born June 28 to Helga.

1944

The Photographs of Abraham Lincoln, with Frederick Hill Meserve, published. Brother Martin Sandburg dies April 7.

1945

Moves to Connemara Farm, Flat Rock, N.C., in late fall.

1946

Birthplace at Galesburg dedicated as historic site.

1948

Remembrance Rock published. Goes to Hollywood to help plan it as a film. Receives LL.D. from Augustana College.

1949

Lincoln Collector: The Story of Oliver R. Barrett's Great Private Collection is published.

1950

Received Ph.D. from Uppsala University, Sweden. Publishes *Complete Poems*, which wins Pulitzer Prize for poetry. *The New American Songbag* published.

1952

Receives National Institute of Arts and Letters gold medal for history and biography.



1953

Autobiography *Always the Young Strangers* published. Attends Carl Sandburg Day banquet in Chicago on 75th birthday. Receives Poetry Society of America gold medal.

1954

Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and The War Years, a condensation of the six volumes in one, published.

1955

Prairie-Town Boy, a child's version of his autobiography, published. Writes prologue to Family of Man, a book of photographs selected by Edward Steichen.

1956

Paid \$30,000 by University of Illinois for manuscripts, library, and papers. Receives Humanities Award from Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Nov. 18 proclaimed Carl Sandburg Day in Chicago.

1957

The Sandburg Range, an anthology of his work, published.

1958

Named "Honorary Ambassador" of North Carolina on March 27, Sandburg Day in Raleigh. Sister Mary Johnson dies July 29.

1959

Delivers Lincoln Day address Feb. 12 before a joint session of Congress. Visits Moscow with Edward Steichen under State Department auspices for "Family of Man" exhibit. Travels to Stockholm for Swedish-American Day and receives Litteris et Artibus medal from King Gustav.

1960

Works in Hollywood as consultant for film "The Greatest Story Ever Told." Publishes paper-bound volumes *Harvest Poems 1910-1960* and *Wind Song*, poems for children.

1962

Designated poet laureate of Illinois.

1963

Honey and Salt published. Receives International United Poets Award as "Hon. Poet Laureate of the U.S.A."



1964

Receives Presidential Medal of Freedom from Lyndon B. Johnson.



1967

Dies July 22 at home in Flat Rock, N.C., at age 89.

1977

Lilian Steichen Sandburg dies Feb. 18 at age 94.

Armchair Explorations

Of utmost importance to those interested in Carl Sandburg are the books he wrote himself. They are listed in the chronology on pages 122-125. Look for them at your local library or bookstore, or write to Eastern National Park and Monument Association, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, Flat Rock, North Carolina 28731, for a sales catalogue.

Books written or edited by family members:

Sandburg, Helga. A Great and Glorious Romance: The Story of Carl Sandburg and Lilian Steichen. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.

Sandburg, Margaret, editor. *Breathing Tokens* (a collection of previously unpublished poems by Carl Sandburg), Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.

Steichen, Paula. *My Connemara*. Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1969 (reprinted by Acorn Press, Eastern National Park and Monument Association).

Steichen, Edward, editor. Sandburg: Photographers View Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966.

Other books about Sandburg that you may want to read:

Callahan, North. *Carl Sandburg: Lincoln of Our Literature*. New York University Press, 1970.

Durnell, Hazel. *The America of Carl Sandburg*. The University Press of Washington, D.C. 1965.

Golden, Harry. *Carl Sandburg*. The World Publishing Co., 1961.

Haas, Joseph and Gene Lovitz. *Carl Sandburg: A Pictorial Biography*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1967.

Mitgang, Herbert, editor. *The Letters of Carl Sandburg*. Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968.

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National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior

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